

GRC EGYPT

WISDOM. RESILIENCE. LEADERSHIP.

Across generations, women have transformed knowledge into progress, responsibility into trust, and leadership into lasting impact.

Their empowerment is not a social statement alone. It is a governance priority, an economic advantage, and a shared responsibility.

Step into

a legacy where wisdom inspires action, resilience creates impact, and leadership shapes what comes next.

THE SCENT OF KEMET

Meet the Women Building Tomorrow

The GRC Summit Egypt is more than just an annual summit. It's a global hub where leaders, experts, and academics unite to connect, share knowledge, and shape the future of digital governance. With a mission to empower leaders, the summit provides cutting-edge insights and tools to build resilient, forward-thinking governance frameworks that tackle tomorrow's challenges. It also serves as a platform to explore the latest technological advancements and their impact on governance structures, driving transformation across the MENA region and beyond.





SCENT OF

There is a fragrance that do

It rises from the banks of the oldest river on earth, carried not in petals or resins, but in memory. In governance. In the quiet, unrelenting authority of women who shaped empires before empires had a name for themselves. The ancient Egyptians called their land Kemet "the Black Land" — fertile, dark, abundant. And it was never solely a land of kings. It was a land of architects, physicians, administrators, and queens who did not merely stand beside power. They were the power. That scent has never left us.

Great governance has always had two faces: the internal and the external. Women have long mastered both. Internally, they build cultures of accountability that outlast leadership cycles, asking the questions no one else will ask. Externally, they build bridges, across borders, across

The scent of Kemet. The Scent of Wisdom.

The background of the entire page is a rich, golden-brown Egyptian temple wall. At the top, there are hieroglyphs and a large winged sun disk. Below that, a row of smaller figures and symbols is visible. The main part of the wall features a repeating pattern of stylized lotus flowers. In the foreground, four women dressed as Egyptian goddesses stand in profile, facing right. They wear elaborate headdresses with snakes and gold jewelry. The woman on the far left holds a staff, while the others hold lotus flowers. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the wall and the women's attire.

OF KEMET

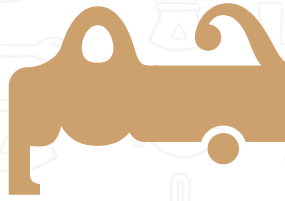


Does not fade with centuries

sectors, across the digital arteries of our interconnected world. And it is on that digital frontier where this truth becomes most urgent. Digital governance is not a technical discipline alone, it is a profoundly human one. It demands the wisdom to regulate intelligence not simply because it can cause harm, but because it should serve dignity. The women whose words fill these pages understand this with a clarity that is earned, not given.

The fragrance of Kemet is not nostalgia. It is a living thing, present in every governance framework written to outlast the administration that commissioned it, in every boardroom where a woman speaks not because she was given the floor, but because the conversation could not continue credibly without her. **This is**

The Scent of Resilience. The Scent of Leadership.



Dr. Lamise A. Negm's Words

Shaping Tomorrow: From Awareness to Sustainable Impact

"Awareness is not a module in a training program, it is the foundation of a culture slow, stubborn, and powerful enough to actually change the world."

Think about the last time a policy actually changed how someone behaved. Not just what they were required to do but how they genuinely thought and acted. Real change is rarely top-down. It starts inside a person, long before any regulation reaches them.

That is why sustainable development, at its core, is a human story before it is a strategic one. It begins the moment a child understands that their choices have consequences for themselves, for the people around them, and for a future they will one day help shape. Awareness is not a module in a training program. It is the foundation everything else is built on.

When we invest in that
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foundation early teaching children to think responsibly, manage their resources, and respect the world they live in we are not just running a social program. We are quietly building the next generation of professionals, entrepreneurs, and leaders. The classroom is where culture starts.

But that culture must also evolve in what it celebrates. For too long, society handed young people a very short list of acceptable ambitions. Doctor. Engineer. Lawyer. The result is generations of capable people squeezed into the same narrow spaces, while the economy quietly suffers from the skills it never developed. A technician, a vocational specialist, an agricultural scientist these are not lesser paths. They are the paths a real, functioning economy depends on. Changing that perception is not just an education reform. It is an act of sustainable development in itself.

As mindsets shift, so must the rooms where decisions are made. Diverse leadership is not a nice-to-have it is how organizations stay relevant, resilient, and honest about the world they operate in. Women leading complex institutions, balancing competing demands, and delivering results have long proven what should no longer need proving. Their presence in boardrooms strengthens governance not as a symbol, but as a practical advantage.

And all of this the awareness, the education, the redefined success, the diverse leadership only holds if the culture holds. Sustainable development is not a project with a deadline. It is what happens when a society decides, collectively, that learning matters, that every contribution counts, and that the people coming after us deserve better than what we inherited by accident.

Awareness leads to education.
Education reframes success.



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Success diversifies leadership.
Leadership shapes culture.
And culture slow, stubborn,
and powerful is what actually
changes the world.

The Scent Of



Queen Hetepheres I

"You do not need to be seen to be essential. Build the ones who will build the world, that is the longest monument of all."

Queen Meritaten

"Do not wait for the storm to pass before you lead. Learn to govern inside the storm. That is where real leaders are made."

Queen Hatshepsut

"Build so well, so honestly, so completely, that erasure becomes impossible. Your work is your name. Make it undeniable."

Kemet



Queen Ahhotep I

"When everything is falling, do not wait to be asked to hold it. Step forward. The line does not hold itself."

Peseshet

"Master your craft so completely that the world has no argument left. Knowledge is the one authority they cannot take by decree."

Queen Ahmose-Nefertari

"Lead so that people carry you in their hearts long after you have left the room. Power given by fear ends. Power given by love endures."

Queen Tiye

"Your origin is not your ceiling. The world beyond your borders is not foreign territory, it is your extended responsibility. Reach across. Always reach across."



Acting Chief Executive Officer, Personal Data Protection Center
Advisor to the ICT Minister for Data Governance

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Suzanne El Akabaoui's Words

Women Leadership in Data Privacy and Building a Culture of Personal Data Protection

As Egypt advances the implementation of its Personal Data Protection Law and strengthens its digital economy, the conversation around women empowerment in technology must move beyond representation alone. The real question is not whether women can lead in digital governance and data protection, but why women's leadership and contributions have become increasingly important to building trust, shaping responsible technology, and fostering a culture of personal data protection.

Data protection sits at the intersection of law, technology, governance, ethics, and human rights. At its core, however, personal data protection is about people. It is about safeguarding individual rights, preserving trust, and ensuring that technological advancement remains aligned with societal values. As digital technologies continue to transform the way governments, businesses, and individuals interact, the importance of effective data governance and personal data protection continues to grow.

Alongside the evolution of the field itself, women have assumed increasingly prominent leadership roles across the digital governance landscape. This did not emerge overnight; rather, it reflects years of active engagement and contribution across policy, regulation, research, compliance, and awareness initiatives. As someone who has had the privilege of witnessing and contributing to this evolution, one lesson has remained clear throughout my experience in the field of data governance and personal data protection: building a culture of personal data protection requires more than legal frameworks and regulatory requirements. It requires leadership capable of fostering awareness, promoting accountability, and embedding responsible data practices across organizations and society.

The importance of such leadership has become even more evident as digital technologies continue to evolve and the governance landscape becomes increasingly complex. Today, personal data protection is no longer discussed in isolation from broader digital governance considerations. Artificial intelligence, digital platforms, cloud services, and data-driven innovation offer tremendous opportunities for economic growth and social development. At the same time, they introduce complex questions about accountability, transparency, fairness, and the protection of personal data, requiring policymakers, regulators, businesses, and technology professionals to work together to ensure that innovation is accompanied by appropriate safeguards.

Artificial intelligence provides a particularly important example. As AI systems become increasingly integrated into decision-making processes, concerns relating to bias, discrimination, transparency, and automated decision-making are receiving growing attention from regulators, policymakers, businesses, and civil society around the world. AI systems do not emerge in isolation; they are shaped by the data used to train them, the assumptions embedded within their design, and the perspectives of those involved in their development and governance. When those perspectives are limited, the risk of unintended bias and exclusion increases.

The growing attention being given to these issues has also highlighted the contributions of many women leaders, researchers, and advocates who have helped advance conversations surrounding data protection, ethical AI, accountability, and responsible technology governance. Ultimately, the value of

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these discussions lies not only in identifying emerging challenges, but also in strengthening the governance frameworks, awareness efforts, and institutional practices needed to address them responsibly.

At the Personal Data Protection Center (PDPC), we recognize that building a culture of personal data protection requires more than laws and regulations. It requires embedding privacy considerations into the broader digital transformation journey through awareness, education, institutional capacity building, and continuous engagement with all sectors of society. Effective governance should not be viewed as a barrier to innovation, but rather as a foundation for building trust and enabling sustainable digital growth.

Women professionals and leaders have played, and continue to play, a vital role in advancing these efforts, contributing not only to policy development but also to public awareness, institutional capacity building, and the promotion of responsible data practices.

The story of digital governance is still being written, and its next chapter will be shaped by those who choose to engage, contribute, and lead. It is encouraging to see an increasing number of women helping shape that future, not as observers of change, but as active participants in building it.





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Peseshet

The Woman Who Led Ancient Egypt's
Medical Profession



When discussing the remarkable women of Ancient Egypt, the names of queens and royal figures often dominate the conversation. Yet among the inscriptions of the Old Kingdom appears another extraordinary woman whose influence came not from a throne, but from knowledge and professional authority. Her name was Peseshet.

Living during Egypt's

Fourth Dynasty, around the time the Great Pyramids of Giza were being constructed, Peseshet is widely recognized as one of the earliest known women associated with the medical profession in human history. Her existence is documented through inscriptions discovered in Giza by Egyptian archaeologist Selim Hassan during excavations in the twentieth century. The inscription records her title as "Lady Overseer of the Female Physicians," a designation that reveals an organized medical structure in Ancient Egypt and the presence of women practicing medicine under professional supervision.

The significance of this title extends beyond the individual herself. It provides evidence that women participated in specialized professions more than 4,500 years ago and that medicine

in Ancient Egypt was sufficiently developed to include administrative leadership and professional hierarchy. While scholars continue to debate whether Peseshet was personally a practicing physician or primarily an administrator, there is broad agreement that her position reflected exceptional status and authority within Egypt's medical community.

Ancient Egyptian medicine was among the most advanced systems of the ancient world. Medical papyri, surgical practices, pharmaceutical treatments, and specialized physicians were already established centuries before similar systems appeared elsewhere. Within this environment, Peseshet's title suggests that female practitioners were not merely participants but were formally recognized within the healthcare system.



Head of Corporate Governance, CIB

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Amina El Kenany's Words

Beyond Barriers: The Women Reshaping Banking Leadership

Banking is a tough industry – the pressure is constant, the margins for error are slim, and the expectations are unrelenting. It is also, for much of its history, an industry dominated by males. Not because women were not capable, but because the system was not yet ready to see it.

What I witnessed throughout my career told a very different story. I was fortunate to work under female leader who commanded rooms, made difficult calls, and carried their teams through some genuinely challenging periods. Yet they led anyway. With composure, with sharp judgment, and with a quiet determination that left a lasting impression on everyone around them, including myself. They did not just shape my career – they shaped my understanding of what real leadership looks like.

Over the decades, the banking sector in Egypt has changed. Women are no
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longer navigating this industry from the margins. They are embedded in its most critical functions – Governance, Risk, Compliance, Strategy – and they are delivering. This shift reflects something important: that when institutions create genuine opportunities, talent rises to meet them. Diversity in leaderships not a gesture. It produces better decisions, stronger cultures, and more resilient organizations.

Corporate Governance, my chosen field, is fundamentally about accountability and integrity. It asks you to speak up when it is uncomfortable and to hold the line when it is inconvenient. In my experience, women in this space have done exactly that – often carrying that responsibility with a level of dedication that goes largely unrecognized.

To the women building their careers in banking today – trust the work you are putting in. Depth and credibility will take you further than any

shortcut. Find people who invest in your growth, and make it your responsibility to do the same for others. The path will not always be straightforward, and the challenges will be real. But as I have seen proven many times throughout my career – where there is a will, there is always a way. That continuity of support and determination is what moves the industry forward, one generation at a time.

The door is open. Walk through it with everything you have.

"Leadership is not defined by who enters the room first, but by who has the courage to hold the line, create opportunities, and open the door wider for those who follow."



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Dr. Sara H. Sabry's Words

Bridging Intelligence: How Technology Is Transforming Accounting and AIS Education

The integration of technology into accounting and education is not merely a technical shift; it is a transformative force for inclusion and progress. As artificial intelligence tools, cloud-based software, and automated reporting systems reshape financial professions, new opportunities emerge for leadership grounded in technical fluency and strategic insight.

In accounting, AI-powered platforms now handle data entry, reconciliation, and even preliminary audits. This automation frees professionals to focus on higher-value work: strategic analysis, ethical judgment, risk assessment, and advisory roles. When routine tasks are automated, leadership potential rises.

Education, too, is being redefined. Digital learning environments, adaptive software, and AI tutors are making technical skills more accessible. In the specific field

of Accounting Information Systems (AIS) education, the transformation is especially profound. AIS sits at the intersection of accounting principles and information technology; covering systems design, internal controls, data flow, ERP platforms, AI-assisted audit tools, and cybersecurity in financial systems.

Women leading in AIS education are not only teaching these subjects; they are reshaping curricula to reflect real-time industry change by integrating cloud-based ERP platforms into university courses, developing hands-on training modules for AI-driven financial reporting, teaching students how to use automated reconciliation tools and anomaly detection systems, and preparing the next generation to become confident architects of tech-enabled financial processes.

AIS education today demands more than textbook knowledge. It requires fluency in continuous



auditing, data governance, and the ethical use of AI in financial decision-making. Educators in this space are transforming classrooms into innovation labs, ensuring that students graduate with both technical competence and strategic confidence.

When technology lowers barriers to entry in accounting, it also raises the ceiling for achievement. And when AIS education equips learners with real-world digital tools, it creates professionals who do not simply use software; they improve it, lead with it, and teach others to do the same. This is a conversation about systems, skills, and structural progress. By focusing on how technology serves as a bridge in accounting and AIS education, we recognize those who are designing, teaching, and leading with these tools. Their work shapes industries, strengthens financial systems, and inspires future generations to see technology not as a barrier, but as a foundation.



Managing Director & Group COO
Nile Radio Productions
Nogoum FM - Nile FM

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Hala Hegazi's Words

From Radio to Digital Ecosystems: Leading Innovation, Growth, and Influence in Modern Media

For decades, success in broadcasting was measured by the strength of a radio signal and the size of its audience. Today, success is measured by something far broader, the ability to engage audiences wherever they choose to consume content. At Nile Radio Productions, this shift challenged management to rethink as to what kind of a company we wanted to be. While our foundation remains Egypt's leading radio brands, Nogoum FM and Nile FM, we realized that the future wasn't about replacing traditional media, it was about extending its reach through a connected digital ecosystem.

As audience habits evolved, so did our strategy. Content could no longer exist only in the moment it was broadcast. Every interview, or show entertainment segment now had the opportunity to live beyond the airwaves through

podcasts, streaming platforms, social media & video. Radio became the beginning of the conversation, not the end of it.

This transformation extended across our entire business. Nogoum FM TV strengthened our visual presence, while our record labels, Nogoum Records and The Music Hub, adapted to a music industry driven by digital distribution and streaming. Our investment in advanced recording studios further reflected our commitment to supporting artists, creators, and brands with world-class production tailored for today's digital landscape.

What has remained constant is our belief that compelling content is at the heart of every successful platform. Technology continues to evolve, but audiences will always be skewed to familiar & trusted voices, and meaningful experiences. Digital platforms

have expanded how those stories are delivered, not why they matter.

For media organizations, innovation is no longer optional, it is essential. But innovation should never come at the expense of identity. The most successful companies will be those that preserve the credibility and influence they have built while embracing new ways to connect with audiences.

NRP's journey has never been about moving away from traditional radio quite the contrary, It has been about building on its strengths and transforming NRP into a more diversified media company where broadcasting, music, digital content, video, and production work together to create greater value for audiences, and advertisers.

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Queen Tiye

The Woman Who Redefined Royal Influence

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Among the extraordinary women of Ancient Egypt, Queen Tiye stands as one of the most influential figures of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Unlike many royal women before her, Tiye was not born into the ruling family. Yet she rose to become the Great Royal Wife of Pharaoh Amenhotep III and one of the most respected women in the ancient world.

Living during one of

Egypt's most prosperous periods, Tiye occupied a position that extended far beyond ceremonial duties. Her name appeared on official monuments, royal inscriptions, and diplomatic records, reflecting a level of visibility rarely granted to queens of her time. Foreign rulers knew her by name and, remarkably, some communicated with her directly regarding political matters and international relations.

The surviving Amarna Letters—one of the most important diplomatic archives of the ancient world—reveal the respect Tiye commanded beyond Egypt's borders. Correspondence from Tushratta, King of Mitanni, demonstrates that she was regarded as a trusted and knowledgeable figure in matters of state, even after the death of her husband. These records suggest that her influence continued during the reign of her son,

Akhenaten, making her a significant presence across multiple generations of royal rule.

Queen Tiye's prominence also challenged traditional expectations of royal women. Statues, scarabs, and monuments frequently depicted her alongside Amenhotep III as a visible partner in royal authority. Her image was celebrated throughout the kingdom, and her status became a defining feature of one of Egypt's greatest eras.

More than three thousand years after her lifetime, Queen Tiye remains a remarkable example of political presence, diplomatic influence, and historical significance. Her legacy endures not through conquest or monuments alone, but through the written records that reveal the voice of a woman whose influence reached across kingdoms and generations.

She did not inherit a throne. She built one, with knowledge so vast, so precisely wielded, that history could not erase her even when it tried.

Hatshepsut ruled not from the margins of power but from its very center. She wore the double crown. She carried the crook and flail. She commissioned monuments that still stand, trade routes that brought prosperity across continents, and an administrative machinery so finely tuned that Egypt flourished for two decades under her hand. When those who came after her chiseled her name from temple walls, they underestimated one thing: wisdom leaves marks that outlast the hands that try to erase them.


Peseshet stood beside her in spirit — the first woman in recorded history to hold the title of physician, overseeing an entire faculty of female doctors in a civilization that understood, long before the

modern world, that healing is not a gendered act. It is a disciplined one. A wise one. And then there is Hetepheres I, mother of Khufu, keeper of the royal lineage, whose quiet authority shaped the dynasty that would build the greatest monument humanity has ever raised. She did not need a public stage. She needed only influence, and she wielded it completely.

Wisdom, in the language of governance, is not the accumulation of information. It is the ability to see what data alone cannot reveal — the human cost behind



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the compliance metric, the vulnerability beneath the risk score, the dignity at the center of every data point. It is the capacity to ask not only what is lawful but what is right.

Today, women in digital governance carry this inheritance forward. They design AI ethics frameworks that ask harder questions than the technology itself can pose. They build regulatory architectures that account not only for what systems can do, but for what they should do. They sit in standards committees,

in cybersecurity councils, in data protection authorities, and they bring to those rooms something no algorithm has yet been trained to replicate: the wisdom to govern for people, not merely for systems.

The future of digital transformation will not be determined by those who move fastest. It will be shaped by those who move wisely, who understand that a connected world is not automatically a just one, and that governance is the bridge between capability and conscience. Hatshepsut's architects did not simply build tall. They built to last. So do hers.

Wisdom is not inherited. It is practiced — in every policy written with humanity at its core, in every decision that chooses long-term trust over short-term efficiency. It is the oldest form of leadership. And it has never been more urgently needed than now.



Driving Cyber Resilience & Responsible AI Globally
| Board Advisor | 7x Award-Winning Innovator
| Speaker | Educator | Mentor | Women in Tech
Champion

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Ramona Ratiu's Words

Cyber Readiness Is Becoming a Business Advantage in Egypt's AI Economy

Artificial Intelligence is transforming organizations across Egypt and the Middle East. Financial services, telecommunications, energy, healthcare, logistics, and government sectors are embedding AI into daily operations to accelerate efficiency, innovation, and decision-making.

At the same time, cyber threats are evolving at unprecedented speed. Attackers now use AI to automate phishing campaigns, create convincing deepfakes, identify vulnerabilities, and scale identity-based attacks faster than organizations can respond manually. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2026, 94% of leaders identify AI as the primary force driving cybersecurity change in the coming year.

This reality is reshaping cybersecurity priorities. The challenge is no longer only

preventing attacks—it is maintaining operations, making effective decisions under pressure, and recovering quickly when disruption occurs.

AI has become a force multiplier for both defenders and adversaries. Organizations use it to improve threat detection, automate response, reduce alert fatigue, and enhance visibility. Meanwhile, threat actors leverage the same technologies to generate highly targeted phishing campaigns, bypass verification systems through synthetic voice and video, and conduct sophisticated social engineering attacks.

The CrowdStrike 2026 Global Threat Report highlights an 89% increase in attacks conducted by AI-enabled adversaries. These attacks increasingly mimic legitimate communications, making them harder to detect using traditional security controls.

For organizations in Egypt, where digital transformation continues to expand rapidly, the attack surface is growing faster than many conventional security models can handle. Reactive approaches based on manual investigations, static detections, and siloed operations struggle against threats operating at machine speed.

Cyber resilience today extends beyond technology. It is an organizational capability that depends on leadership alignment, operational readiness, and coordinated decision-making. This is particularly critical in banking, telecommunications, energy, transportation, and industrial sectors, where cyber incidents can impact operations, customer trust, regulatory compliance, and business continuity.

Organizations that respond effectively during major incidents typically focus on executive crisis coordination,

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identity-centric security, AI-enhanced monitoring, business continuity integration, disciplined communications, recovery readiness, and continuous testing of decision-making processes.

As a result, Cyber Tabletop Exercises (CTTX) and resilience simulations are becoming increasingly valuable. Modern exercises incorporate AI-driven phishing scenarios, executive deepfakes, adaptive ransomware behavior, media escalation, and regulatory pressure to evaluate how organizations perform under realistic conditions. Their purpose is not only to test technology but to assess whether leadership can make timely, effective decisions while protecting operations and trust.

As Egypt's digital economy continues to grow through AI adoption, fintech innovation, cloud transformation, and smart infrastructure, resilience is becoming a competitive advantage. Organizations that continuously validate readiness, strengthen decision-making, and build operational resilience will be best positioned to thrive in the AI era.



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Ulrika Dellrud's Words

Who Is Still Waiting Outside?

I have spent over 25 years at the intersection of privacy, data governance, and emerging technologies. Through all of it, the question I return to most often is not a technical one. It is: who gets a seat at the table — and who is still waiting outside?

The decisions made in risk committees, AI ethics boards, and data protection offices do not merely remain within the organizations. They shape what technologies get built, who they protect, and who they leave behind. When those rooms lack diversity, the blind spots do not disappear. They just go unchecked.

I did not start my career with a strategy. I started with curiosity, law degrees, and a belief that data was going to change everything before most people used that word in a governance context. What I lacked was a clear picture of how to navigate a field being run almost entirely by people who did not look like me. That is where mentorship changed things.

My own mentor — a senior

legal advisor with no obligation to make time for a young lawyer — did something simple but rare. She told me what she actually thought in a straight way. And did not just encourage me. She told me where I was strong, where I was not, and what the landscape looked like from where she stood. That kind of honesty is more difficult to come across than you would think and is worth more than almost any formal training.

I have tried to carry that forward. Over the years, I have mentored women at different stages: early-career professionals who are technically brilliant but struggle to translate that into authority, and mid-career women doing the work of three people while getting credit for one. What I consistently find is not a lack of capability but a gap in access — to networks, to sponsorship, to people standing up for women and who are willing to say she should be in that room.

Cybersecurity, AI regulation, Privacy — these areas are still,



Global Executive Leader and Strategic Advisor -
Data, AI, Privacy, Digital Ethics

to some extent, being defined. Without a concerted effort, we fall back into the same default structures: the same informal networks, the same assumptions about who is authoritative, the same pattern of women doing the groundwork while others present it. The teams I have worked with that brought genuinely diverse perspectives into governance design produced better results by, for instance, attaining a higher quality of, let's say, a DPIA and ensuring that a policy actually anticipates how a system or a process will be used by the people it affects. What I would say to younger women: technical depth alone is not enough, and neither is outworking everyone else. Find people who will tell you the truth about how decisions actually get made. And -- be one of those people for someone else! The conversation about what digital governance should look like needs you in it.



Heavy Industry Engineer | Past President & Past Honorary Secretary, Rotary Red Sea El Gouna



Eng. Lobna A. Fathi's Words

Driving Change from the Ground Up: Empowering Women in Remote Communities

Lessons from the Field and Rotary

In my engineering career, success is quantified by efficiency, asset optimization, and hard output data. With Rotary, I applied that same rigorous, metric-driven lens to social development.

Case Study: Through targeted civic initiatives in Egypt 100millionseha.eg we raised tens of awareness sessions on

- The importance of early detection and treatment of tumors
- Blood donation campaigns
- General regular check ups.

Community-backed vocational programs through nursing training with our medical convoys.

By pairing basic literacy classes with high-demand technical skills—such as local handicraft manufacturing or cooking. Holding exhibitions to sell housewives products. It isn't just earning an income—

It's altering the cultural paradigm of her village. Her daughters see self-reliance normalized, and her sons grow up respecting female authority and financial autonomy.

A Shared Responsibility Matrix

- **Governments**
De-risk the Infrastructure: Establish decentralized education centers, invest in rural tech/internet networks. Encouragement: The government should consider providing incentives and facilities for investors in remote areas.
- **Businesses**
Decentralization: Global companies and factories should expand and invest more in remote areas and utilize local labour instead of exporting it to the capital or major cities.
Flexibility: Global companies can expand more with the idea of work from home and flexible

working hours which will allow more women to be involved.

- **Civil Society & Rotary**
The Trust Bridge & Catalyst: NGOs and Rotary clubs operate on the ground where corporate entities cannot easily tread. Our job is to build the trust, deliver customized vocational training, and maintain, transparent project governance.

A Message to the Future Generation of Women Leaders

To the young women reading this—especially those standing in the villages of Upper Egypt, the coastal towns of the Red Sea, or any remote corner of the globe where the path forward seems unpaved:

Do not look for a seat at the table; build the table.



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As a female engineer from Assiut, Upper Egypt, and community leadership as Past President and Honorary Secretary for Rotary Red Sea El Couna—I have seen firsthand where our current models of progress succeed, and where they leave people behind.

Why Women's Empowerment is Non-Negotiable for SDGs

Data consistently shows that women reinvest up to 90% of their income back into their families' nutrition, health, and schooling (compared to 30-40% for men). In engineering terms, investing in women offers the highest conversion efficiency for social impact.



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Queen Hatshepsut

The Woman Who Built Prosperity

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More than 3,500 years ago, Ancient Egypt witnessed the rise of one of its most remarkable leaders:

Queen Hatshepsut. Born a princess of the Eighteenth Dynasty, she became one of the few women in history to rule Egypt as Pharaoh, governing for nearly two decades during a period of peace, stability, and prosperity.

Rather than defining her reign through conquest, Hatshepsut focused on development and nation-building. She sponsored one of Egypt's most celebrated expeditions to the Land of Punt, reopening trade routes that brought valuable resources, exotic plants, incense, ebony, and luxury goods to Egypt. Her reign also marked an extraordinary period of architectural achievement, including the construction of her magnificent mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari and numerous monuments across the kingdom.

Hatshepsut's legacy extends beyond her accomplishments as a ruler. Her story stands as an enduring testament to the capacity of women to lead, innovate, and shape the future of their

communities. Through vision, diplomacy, and investment in economic and cultural prosperity, she demonstrated that leadership is measured not only by authority but also by the ability to create opportunities, inspire progress, and leave a lasting impact on society.

Thousands of years later, the monuments she built and the records of her reign continue to speak of a woman who transformed possibility into achievement and secured her place among the greatest leaders of Ancient Egypt.



Chief Compliance Officer, ADCb Egypt

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■ *Yasmine Elabd's Words*

From Regulatory Obligation to Strategic Advantage: How Digital Transformation is Redefining Compliance Leadership

The compliance landscape is undergoing a profound transformation. In an era where technological changes are becoming very fast and super-dynamic, all businesses, including Financial Institutions, are urged to not only cope with new technological breakthroughs and customer expectations, but also to proactively surpass the new technologies to keep their market presence, organizational growth, resilience and competitive advantages. In this context, what was once viewed primarily as a regulatory obligation has evolved into a strategic pillar setting the overall direction for the organization, and accordingly, digital innovation is reshaping not only how compliance operates but also how compliance leaders create value for their organizations. Financial institutions now operate in increasingly complex regulatory environments. While regulatory

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expectations grow, technological advancements, changing customer behaviors, and emerging risks present new challenges to businesses. In response, compliance leaders are shifting away from traditional monitoring and reporting activities and toward a more proactive, strategic role that enables informed decision-making throughout the organization. Compliance functions can now use advanced technologies such as real-time data, predictive analytics, and intelligent automation to better identify risks and respond to regulatory developments. This transformation allows compliance professionals to shift their focus away from administrative tasks and toward strategic risk management and advisory activities. Modern compliance leadership necessitates a forward-thinking approach. Instead of reacting to regulatory changes as they happen, they try to anticipate future developments and

incorporate compliance considerations into strategic planning processes. Compliance leaders are increasingly trusted advisors to executive management and boards, shaping business strategies while ensuring compliance with regulatory expectations and ethical standards. Digital transformation also creates opportunities to strengthen collaboration between compliance and other business functions. Whether supporting the launch of digital products, evaluating emerging technologies, or managing third-party risks, compliance leaders are increasingly involved in strategic initiatives from the outset. This integrated approach allows organizations to identify potential risks early and implement solutions that balance innovation with regulatory compliance. Furthermore, regulators themselves are embracing technology and encouraging institutions to modernize

their compliance frameworks. Organizations that invest in digital compliance capabilities are often better positioned to demonstrate effective risk management, respond to regulatory inquiries, and adapt to evolving supervisory expectations. The future compliance leader must therefore possess a diverse skill set that extends beyond regulatory expertise. Strategic thinking, technological literacy, data-driven decision-making, stakeholder management, and leadership capabilities are becoming equally important. The ability to translate regulatory requirements into business value will distinguish the next generation of compliance professionals. As digital transformation continues to reshape the financial services industry, compliance is no longer merely a cost of doing business. It has become a strategic asset that enhances organizational resilience, strengthens stakeholder trust, and supports sustainable growth.





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There's a moment that happens in every control room – right before the red light flicks on and the camera goes live – where everything that was planned, debated, approved, and agonised over becomes irreversible. What goes out, goes out. You can't unsay it. You can't unfeel it for the viewer sitting in a Soweto lounge or a Cairo apartment at 8pm, tired from their day, trusting you.

That moment is where governance, risk and compliance stop being a framework and become something deeply, uncomfortably human.

South Africa's broadcasting landscape sits on top of layered complexity that most people outside the industry don't fully see. We have the Broadcasting Act. The ICASA regulations. The BCCSA codes. The national broadcasters public mandate.

Then below all of that – the real stuff – you've got political pressure, advertiser nervousness, audience fragmentation, and the very real question of whose story gets told and whose gets quietly shelved. GRC in South African broadcasting isn't just about ticking boxes for a regulator.

It's about managing the risk of erasure. Of harm. Of a whole generation watching content that tells them, subtly and persistently, that they don't matter.

Twenty years behind the camera taught me that.

I've produced business programming that had to walk the line between sponsor

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Katlego Msomi's Words

The Screen Doesn't Lie: Broadcasting, GRC, and the Women Shaping What Africa Believes

expectations and journalistic integrity. I've sat in rooms where the "risk" being managed wasn't financial — it was reputational, political, social. Current affairs content in this country carries weight that a compliance checklist simply wasn't designed to hold. And youth development programming? That's where I've felt it most. Because when you're making content for young South Africans, you're not just informing them. You're shaping the lens through which they'll interpret everything else that comes after. That's enormous power. And enormous power without a governance framework built on ethics, not just rules, is genuinely dangerous.

Here's what doesn't get said enough: the women holding this together, in South Africa and across the continent, are doing it largely without a roadmap. Egypt's broadcasting sector tells a fascinating parallel story. In recent years, Egyptian women in media — particularly in regulatory and editorial leadership — have been navigating their own version of this tension. The Egyptian Radio and Television Union, one of Africa's oldest and most influential state broadcasters, has seen increasing female presence

in content decision-making. But like South Africa, the challenge isn't just getting women into the room. It's making sure the frameworks those rooms operate within are built to support ethical, audience-first thinking, not just compliance-on-paper.

Both countries carry the weight of state broadcasting history. Both are wrestling with how to modernise governance structures without losing cultural relevance. And in both contexts, women leaders are often the ones asking the harder questions — about representation, about editorial independence, about what "responsible content" actually means when your audience is young, hungry, and deeply influenced by what they see on screen.

That's the conversation I want us to have across borders. Not a formal knowledge transfer. A real one.

Because there are things South African broadcasters have learned from 30 years of post-apartheid media transformation — about community accountability, about risk in storytelling, about what happens when compliance becomes culture rather than obligation — that Egyptian colleagues would find genuinely useful. And Egypt's experience



TV Broadcaster, Producer, BCom Risk Management (UNISA)

navigating content governance within a complex socio-political environment, while maintaining regional media reach across North Africa and the Arab world, holds lessons we haven't fully tapped into here.

Women in broadcasting leadership, whether in Johannesburg or Cairo, are not just managing content. We're managing consequence. Every editorial decision is a risk decision. Every story commissioned or killed is a governance act. And the compliance framework that surrounds all of it either enables us to lead with integrity — or quietly pressures us to play it safe in ways that ultimately fail our audiences.

Leading change, in this industry, means refusing to separate the compliance conversation from the ethics conversation. It means building GRC frameworks that ask who is harmed before they ask what is permitted. It means women in this space claiming their seat not just at the editorial table, but at the governance table — where the rules themselves get written.

The screen doesn't lie. And neither should the systems behind it.



رغمين عامر

Germien Amer's Words

Women and Digital Governance: Who is really designing the future?

For decades, women's empowerment has been measured through traditional indicators: parliamentary seats, executive positions, and representation within institutions historically associated with decision making power.

In the past decade, Egypt has witnessed remarkable transformation. The government took unprecedented steps to strengthen women's representation in Parliament, the Senate, and the judicial system, a historic shift recognizing women as protectors of justice and institutional authority. The Central Bank of Egypt further promoted female representation across banking sector boards, acknowledging that diversity in leadership is a strategic pillar for stronger governance and sustainable economic development.

These milestones reflect years of genuine progress. However, they are no longer enough.

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Today, power is no longer shaped solely inside parliaments, courtrooms, or boardrooms. The world is entering an entirely new governance era, one defined by artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, automated decision-making, and digital infrastructure quietly shaping how societies function and nations build their future.

Although women are gradually securing seats within conventional governance structures, they remain significantly underrepresented in the digital spaces where tomorrow's world is being designed. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2023), women represent less than one-third of professionals working in advanced technology sectors. Within digital leadership roles inside governments, the gap becomes even wider.


The answer is deeply structural. From early childhood, girls

are subtly discouraged from entering STEM fields. Even when women break through these barriers, institutional challenges continue, leadership cultures reward conformity, caregiving responsibilities interrupt career advancement, and mentorship access remains unequal.

Yet where women do lead digital transformation, a fascinating pattern emerges. In Estonia, women helped build one of the world's most advanced digital governance ecosystems. In Kenya, female technologists developed platforms increasing transparency around public spending. In India, women leading digital identity initiatives pushed for stronger privacy protections for vulnerable citizens.

The pattern is clear: women lead digital transformation with a more human-centered approach.

Strategic communication holds extraordinary power

A woman is depicted from the chest up, wearing an elaborate Egyptian headdress. The headdress is black with gold horizontal stripes and a gold cobra (uraeus) on top. She is also wearing a gold and black striped collar (wesekh) and a gold necklace with a large black stone. The background is white with faint, repeating icons of Egyptian symbols like the uraeus, lotus, and ankh. A teal horizontal bar is at the top right, and a teal decorative element is at the top left.

here. For too long, women's inclusion has been framed as a diversity obligation rather than a performance-driven opportunity. That narrative must change. Diverse leadership builds stronger institutions. Inclusive teams design better systems.

Governments must establish measurable representation targets in digital leadership. Educational institutions must encourage women into STEM earlier. Organizations must build cultures that retain female talent. Media must amplify women experts and position them as thought leaders.

If women remain excluded from shaping digital governance, we risk building systems that simply replicate the inequalities society claims to be eliminating.

Women's empowerment in digital governance is not about giving women a seat at the table. It is about redesigning the table itself.



Queen Hetepheres I

The Mother of a Dynasty

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In the history of Ancient Egypt, some women shaped civilization not through public rule, but through lineage, continuity, and the quiet power of legacy. Hetepheres I, a royal woman of Egypt's Fourth Dynasty, remains one of the most important female figures of the Pyramid Age. She is widely identified as the wife of King Sneferu and the mother of King Khufu, the pharaoh associated with the Great Pyramid of Giza.

Hetepheres I lived at a defining moment in Egyptian history, when royal authority, architecture, administration, and state organization reached extraordinary levels. Her position as "King's Mother" placed her at the heart of dynastic continuity, connecting one powerful reign to another and strengthening the royal family's legitimacy. In a society where lineage carried political and spiritual meaning, her role was central to the stability of the kingdom.

Her tomb, discovered at Giza in 1925 by the Harvard University-Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition, revealed one of the richest royal burial assemblages of the Old Kingdom. Although much of the wood had decayed, the surviving gold, faience, alabaster, and carefully reconstructed furniture reflect the exceptional status granted to her. Her chair, bed, canopy, and carrying chair show not only

luxury, but also the cultural respect surrounding royal women of her time.

Hetepheres I represents a powerful dimension of women's impact: the ability to sustain communities through continuity, family leadership, and social influence. Her story reminds us that empowerment is not always expressed through visible authority. Sometimes, it is found in the foundations women help preserve, the generations they guide, and the legacy they leave behind.

More than 4,500 years later, Hetepheres I remains a symbol of heritage, dignity, and enduring female presence in one of the world's greatest civilizations.

They came for her legacy and she survived them all. Ahmose-Nefertari watched her homeland bleed under foreign occupation. She did not retreat into grief. She organized. She negotiated. She built. As the mother of the New Kingdom, the great renaissance of Egyptian civilization, she stood at the founding of an era that would define Egypt for centuries. She was worshipped as a goddess long after her death, not because the people were told to, but because they remembered what she had carried on their behalf. Ahhotep I took command of an army when her sons were at war and her kingdom was fracturing. She held the line. Ancient inscriptions praise her for rallying soldiers, driving out deserters, pacifying Upper Egypt when everything threatened to collapse. She was not a symbol of resilience. She was its operational definition. And Meritaten, daughter of the revolutionary pharaoh Akhenaten, who navigated a court in chaos, a religion in upheaval, a civilization redefining itself in real time, and still governed. Still endured. Still led.

Resilience, in governance, is not the absence of crisis. It is the architecture built before the crisis arrives, and the capacity to rebuild when it does not wait for an invitation. The women who today lead in risk management, cybersecurity, and organizational continuity understand this at a cellular level. They have spent careers being told that the table was full, that the framework was already decided, that the risk had already been assessed, and they built different tables, rewrote the frameworks, and



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The background of the entire page is a dark, textured surface with a subtle pattern of small, light-colored specks, resembling a starry night sky or a close-up of a stone wall. On the left side, two women are depicted from the chest up, wearing traditional ancient Egyptian clothing. The woman in the foreground is wearing a dark, intricately beaded headdress and a dark, patterned garment. The woman behind her is wearing a similar headdress and a lighter-colored garment. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of their clothing and the details of their headdresses.

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identified the risks everyone else had missed. That is not stubbornness. That is institutional resilience in its most essential form. In the age of digital transformation, resilience has acquired new dimensions. A ransomware attack does not announce itself. A regulatory shift in one jurisdiction reshapes compliance obligations across a dozen others overnight. An AI system trained on biased data embeds inequity into infrastructure. The women navigating these landscapes, building response protocols, stress-

testing systems, designing recovery architectures, are doing what Ahhotep did on the banks of the Nile: holding the line when everything else is shifting.

Community responsibility is woven into this. Resilience is never only personal. It is collective. The question a resilient leader asks is not how do I survive this but how do we. The women who built ancient Egypt's social fabric understood that a civilization's strength was measured not by its tallest monument but by its ability to protect the most vulnerable within it. That imperative has not changed. It has only migrated, into digital inclusion policies, into accessible platform design, into governance frameworks that ask who is being left behind by the systems we are building.

Resilience is not recovery. It is refusal, the refusal to accept that collapse is the only available outcome. It is the decision, made under pressure, to build again. To build better. And to ensure that what is built next time protects those who could not protect themselves the last time.



Chief Financial Officer

فريق

Rania Shafik's Words

Women at the Financial Helm: Leading Strategic Growth & Resilience in Modern Banking

The financial helm is no longer solely about managing balance sheets and reporting results; it is about helping shape the future direction of institutions, fostering resilience amid uncertainty, and enabling sustainable growth in a rapidly changing world.

As a woman at the financial helm, I have witnessed firsthand the evolution of the CFO's role, extending far beyond managing numbers. Today, the CFO serves as a strategic partner contributing to the vision, resilience, and decisions that shape the future of an organization. Moreover, women in such roles are adding further value by bringing diverse perspectives to decision-making, talent development, and innovation initiatives.

Throughout my career in banking and finance, I have learned that leadership is tested most during periods of change. The banking industry

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today is evolving faster than ever, driven by technological innovation, changing customer expectations, increasing regulatory demands and economic challenges. Successful leaders have a clear understanding of business objectives and a drive for long-term value creation.

One of the most significant changes I have observed in the banking industry is the impact of emerging technologies. Digital transformation is no longer an option; it is a business imperative. In my experience, successful investments in data analytics, artificial intelligence, and automation require financial leaders with the foresight to support sustainable growth, allocate capital wisely, and deliver measurable outcomes for stakeholders.

Another lesson I have learned is that resilience is built long before a crisis occurs.

Whether facing economic volatility, regulatory changes, or operational disruptions, banks that thrive are those that have strong governance, disciplined risk management, and a culture that embraces adaptability. Also during challenging periods, cross-functional collaboration and clear communication are critical to an organization's ability to respond effectively and support customers.

Looking ahead, I believe institutions that successfully balance profitability, innovation, customer trust, and social responsibility will shape the future of banking. Financial leaders have a unique opportunity to play an important role in this transformation as drivers of resilience and strategic growth. In today's fast-evolving world, resilience is no longer about withstanding disruption; it is about converting uncertainty into opportunity. Financial leaders, and increasingly women in these

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roles, are helping shape banks that are not only stronger and more agile, but also better prepared for sustainable, long-term growth.





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Women have moved far beyond simply occupying leadership positions; they have redefined leadership itself and reshaped the spaces where decisions are made. Across boardrooms, public institutions, and enterprises, women continue to demonstrate that sustainable growth is strongest when it is inclusive, ethical, and centred on people. Their influence is not symbolic but structural, strategic, and transformative.

Today's leadership environment demands a blend of technical competence, empathy, resilience, collaboration, and the courage to challenge entrenched norms. Women often embody these qualities through navigating complex social, economic, and cultural expectations. Their leadership combines strategic clarity with relational intelligence, strengthening institutions and accelerating sustainable development. Research consistently shows that organisations with gender diverse leadership outperform peers in innovation, governance, and long term value creation.

Beyond the data, women's lived-experiences reveal a deeper narrative: leadership

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Regional Director, The Alpha Group; Board Chair, UGAFODE and Immediate Past AFIIA Chair.

Ruth Doreen's Words

From Boardrooms to Impact: The Role of Women in Shaping Sustainable Growth and Inclusive Leadership

grounded in integrity and impact rooted in inclusion. Women do not simply take seats at the table; they reshape the table itself.

A key area of impact is governance and accountability. Women leaders frequently champion transparency, ethical conduct, and responsible stewardship. Their presence on boards correlates with stronger oversight, improved risk management, and more balanced decision making. They broaden perspectives, challenge assumptions, and expand how organisations understand risk and opportunity.

Women also drive sustainable economic growth. For many women leaders, sustainability is not a slogan but a priority shaped by long term thinking. They balance financial performance with social and environmental responsibility, investing in community development, employee well

being, and climate conscious strategies that build resilience. In addition, women excel at building inclusive cultures. Their leadership often emphasises collaboration, mentorship, and empowerment; creating environments where diverse talent thrives and innovation flourishes. Inclusion becomes not only a moral imperative but a strategic advantage.

Women's leadership extends beyond institutions into society. They are at the forefront of social impact, championing financial inclusion, education, health, and entrepreneurship. Their influence inspires young leaders, shapes policy, and expands equitable opportunities.

The ripple effects are profound. Girls gain role models who expand their sense of possibility. Organisations gain balance and innovation. Economies grow as women reinvest in families and communities. Nations strengthen as inclusive leadership reinforces

governance systems. Women's leadership, therefore, is not a women's issue; it is a development imperative.

Yet structural barriers persist, i.e., limited access to capital, cultural biases, unequal caregiving burdens, and underrepresentation in senior roles. Overcoming these requires intentional action: equitable recruitment and promotion policies, investment in leadership development, mentorship and sponsorship networks, inclusive organisational cultures, and male allies who champion change.

Sustainable growth is impossible when half the population is underrepresented. The future belongs to leaders who navigate complexity with wisdom, empathy, and courage. Women are uniquely positioned to shape this future; not by mirroring traditional models, but by transforming them. When we invest in women, we invest in sustainable progress; when women lead, societies rise.



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Mai Abdin's Words

Women: From Building Bridges to Redefining Value

In a world shaped by constant innovation, one truth is often overlooked: progress is not driven by tools alone, but by the capabilities behind their use.

Organizations adopt AI to improve efficiency, enhance decision-making, accelerate execution, and drive sustainable value. But have we paused to ask what it truly takes to achieve these outcomes and whether they are, at their core, human capabilities rather than purely technological ones?

Achieving these outcomes requires more than systems. It demands integrating perspectives, aligning stakeholders, and building trust through governance and capabilities that are fundamentally human. If we converged all the above into one defining trait, it will be **"Relational Intelligence"**. The ability to combine empathy, collaboration, and contextual awareness to drive meaningful **GRC Egypt Magazine 44**

outcomes.

Research shows women demonstrate stronger capabilities in these areas, with 10-15% higher levels of empathy, relational effectiveness, and stakeholder alignment. This is not a comparison, but a signal that advancing transformation requires leveraging human capabilities as a core source of value.

Today, women drive performance by aligning governance, strategy, data, and sustainability into a coherent model, going beyond breaking silos. This impact is recognized at both national and global levels. Egypt Vision 2030 promotes women's leadership, targeting 30% board representation, in line with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5) on Gender Equality, reinforcing that empowerment is both a social and economic priority.

Women's excellence has

evolved into measurable impact over the past decade. Their interpersonal strength enables **integrated oversight, bridging** ESG governance with risk and control frameworks. Their empathy drives **cross-functional collaboration**, bringing audit, business, sustainability, and technology into alignment. Their attention to details ensures disciplined measurement, linking ESG metrics to performance while supporting **transparent disclosure**.

Currently, Egypt's women-on-boards indicator has witnessed remarkable progress since its inception in 2019, reaching 24.8% representation by the end of 2025, an increase of approximately 148%.

The real insight is not about technology alone but about enabling the capabilities that truly **redefine value**. Empowering women is not about replacement but about



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strengthening organizations through inclusion and diversity. When different strengths come together, value doesn't just improve, it accelerates, redefining what was once seen as limits.



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Queen Ahhotep I

The Queen Who Protected a Nation

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At the turning point between the Second Intermediate Period and the rise of Egypt's New Kingdom, Queen Ahhotep I emerged as one of the most powerful royal women of her age. She belonged to the late Seventeenth Dynasty, a period marked by instability, conflict, and the struggle to restore Egyptian unity after Hyksos rule in the north.

Ahhotep I is traditionally identified as the wife of Seqenenre Tao and the

mother of Ahmose I, the king who completed the expulsion of the Hyksos and founded the Eighteenth Dynasty. Yet her importance was not limited to her position within the royal family. Ancient evidence suggests that she played an active role in preserving order, supporting Egypt's military efforts, and protecting the continuity of the state during a time of crisis.

A stela of Ahmose I at Karnak praises Ahhotep for caring for Egypt, gathering its soldiers, bringing back fugitives, collecting deserters, pacifying Upper Egypt, and expelling rebels. Such language presents her not only as a royal mother, but as a figure of authority, resilience, and national responsibility. Her burial treasure, discovered at Dra Abu el-Naga in 1859, further reflects her exceptional status. Among the objects associated with Queen Ahhotep were ceremonial

weapons and golden fly ornaments, items often interpreted as signs of honor, courage, and distinction. These discoveries helped shape her image as a woman connected to both royal dignity and the defense of Egypt.

Ahhotep I offers a powerful historical lens on women's empowerment. Her story shows how women have supported communities not only through care and continuity, but also through courage, crisis leadership, and the protection of collective stability. In moments of uncertainty, her legacy reminds us that the strength of a society is often preserved by those who hold it together when it is most vulnerable.

More than three thousand years later, Ahhotep I remains a symbol of resilience, guardianship, and the enduring role of women in protecting communities and shaping the future.



If your Internal Audit Manager is a woman, what is your first impression? Are you happy, worried, neutral, or simply curious about how she will lead?

Let me share a true story.

In 2009, while working in Egypt at one of the region's largest telecom companies, my Internal Audit Manager was a

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Lilian Nagdy's Words

When the Internal Audit Manager Is a Woman: Beyond First Impressions

woman. In 2015, when I moved to the UAE and joined audit consulting, I again reported to women leaders on several projects. At the beginning, I had an honest human reaction: "Should I worry? Will I be judged more? Will I be treated fairly?"

Years later, after more than a decade in the profession, I became an Internal Audit Manager myself. That journey changed my answer forever.

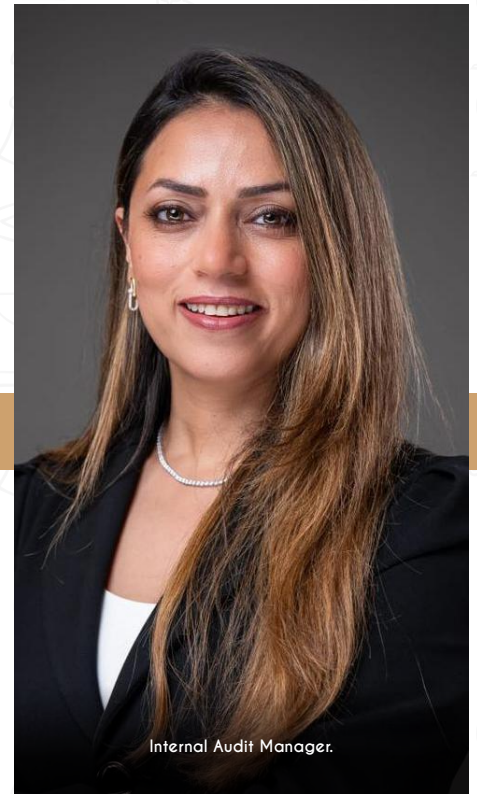
Women in Internal Audit do not lead by impression. They bring a powerful mix of discipline, emotional intelligence, resilience, and attention to detail. They listen beyond the words, read the story behind the finding, notice body language in interviews, and connect facts that may look unrelated at first glance. This is not a soft skill; it is an assurance skill.

Internal Audit is no longer only about checklists, exceptions, and reports. It is about trust,

influence, governance, ethics, culture, risk awareness, and the courage to speak up when the message is uncomfortable. In this space, women leaders can create a strong balance between professional challenge and human understanding. They can be firm without being harsh, empathetic, without being weak, and detailed without losing the strategic view.

Women also lift each other. A strong woman leader does not compete with other women in the room; she opens the door wider, gives confidence, provides guidance, and reminds younger professionals that they belong at the table. She does not remove pressure, but she helps others stand stronger under it.

This does not mean women are better than men in Internal Audit. It means diversity makes assurance stronger. A profession that evaluates governance and culture must itself reflect different



Internal Audit Manager.

perspectives, leadership styles, and voices. When audit teams include women in leadership, they gain sharper observation, richer dialogue, and deeper understanding of people, not only processes.

So, if your Internal Audit Manager is a woman, do not start with assumptions. Start with curiosity. Watch how she asks questions. Watch how she protects independence. Watch how she turns details into insight and insight into action.

Because behind every woman in Internal Audit, there is often a long journey of proving, learning, leading, and lifting others along the way.

And maybe the real question is not:

"What if my Internal Audit Manager is a woman?"

The better question is:

"What value, courage, and perspective will she bring to the audit table?"



Head of Internal Audit Quality Assurance and Follow Up at El Baraka Bank

مناظرة

Raghad Maziad's Words

Women Strengthening Organizational Trust: The Role of Audit Quality Assurance in Driving Excellence and Accountability.

Throughout my career in internal audit and quality assurance, I have learned that organizational trust is not built solely through policies, procedures, and controls. It is built through people who consistently demonstrate integrity, accountability, and a commitment to excellence.

Women are increasingly playing a significant role in strengthening these values across organizations. Within internal audit and quality assurance functions, women contribute not only technical expertise but also diverse perspectives, strong communication skills, and a collaborative leadership style that helps foster trust and transparency.

Audit Quality Assurance is often viewed as a technical process focused on compliance with professional standards. However, its true

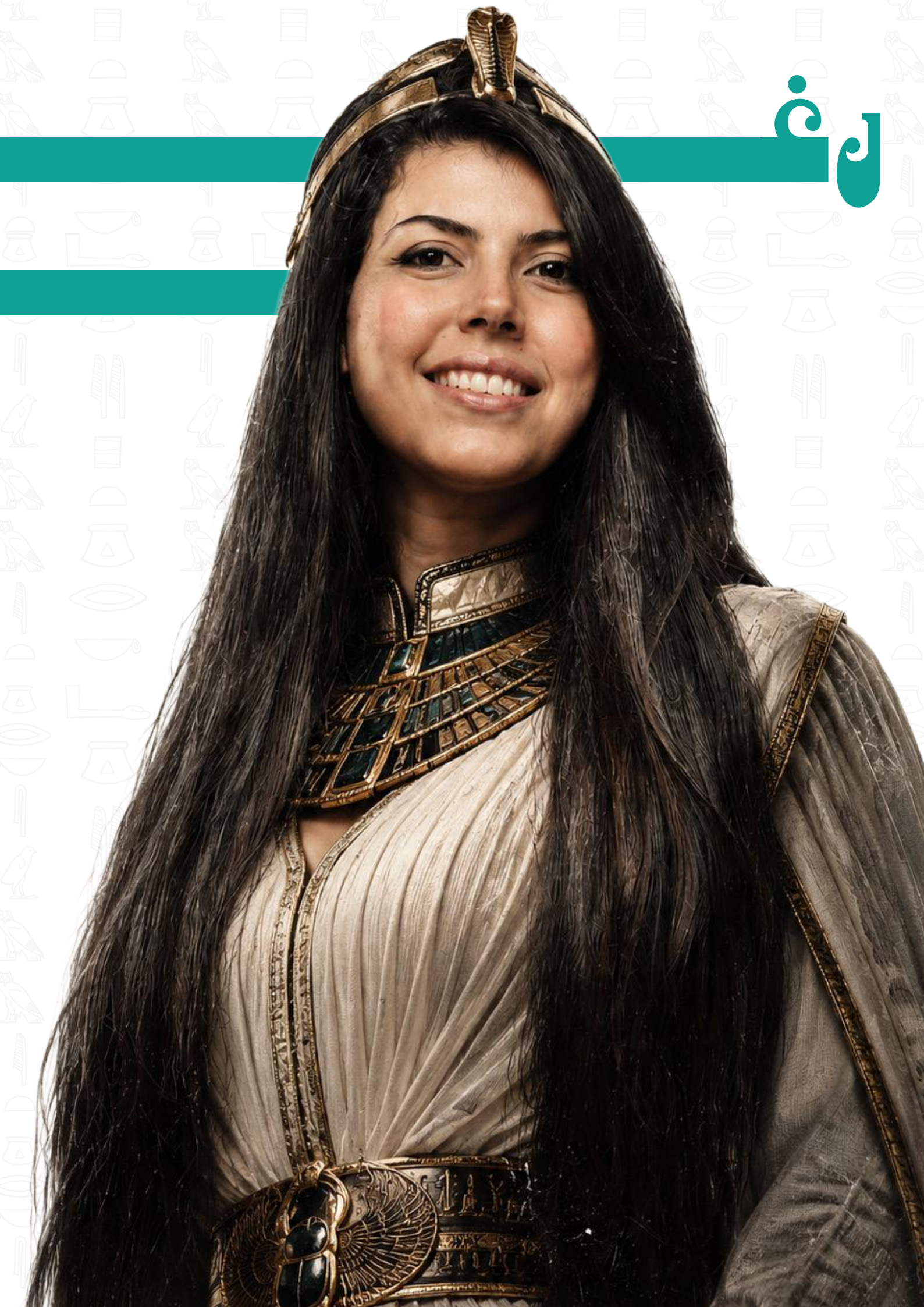
value extends far beyond compliance. By evaluating the effectiveness of audit activities, identifying opportunities for improvement, and promoting continuous enhancement, quality assurance helps ensure that internal audit remains a trusted advisor and a strategic partner to the organization.

As organizations face growing complexity and evolving risks, the demand for high-quality assurance and effective governance continues to increase. Women working in these fields have demonstrated their ability to lead change, encourage innovation, and support sound decision-making while maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and ethics.

Empowering women in governance, risk management, and internal audit is not only

an investment in diversity and inclusion; it is an investment in stronger institutions, better accountability, and sustainable success. When women are given opportunities to lead, their impact extends beyond individual achievement to create lasting value for organizations and society as a whole

"Trust is not built by controls and compliance alone; it is built by leaders who uphold integrity, inspire collaboration, and pursue excellence with unwavering accountability. When women are empowered to lead in audit and assurance, they do more than strengthen governance—they lay the foundations of trust, resilience, and lasting value for organizations and society alike."





تاريخي

Queen Ahmose-Nefertari

The Queen Who Lived in the Memory of the People

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Some leaders are remembered because they ruled. Others are remembered because people continued to need them long after they were gone. Ahmose-Nefertari belongs to the second kind.

As the Great Royal Wife of Ahmose I, she stood at the beginning of Egypt's New Kingdom, a period born after conflict, reunification,

and national rebuilding. But what makes her story exceptional is not only her royal position. It is what happened after her lifetime.

Ahmose-Nefertari became one of the rare queens whose presence moved beyond palace walls into community memory. In Deir el-Medina, the village of artisans who built royal tombs, she was venerated alongside her son Amenhotep I. For these workers and their families, she was not simply an ancient queen; she became a protective figure woven into daily life, rituals, prayers, and local identity.

This gives her story a different meaning for women's empowerment. Her influence was not limited to authority, titles, or monuments. It became social trust. Her image

offered continuity to a working community whose lives depended on skill, discipline, cooperation, and belief in shared protection.

Ahmose-Nefertari opens a richer conversation about women's impact: women do not only lead from the front; they also become anchors of memory, culture, and belonging. Communities survive not only through systems and structures, but through figures who give people confidence, identity, and emotional continuity.

Ahmose-Nefertari's power was not only that she lived as a queen. It was that generations continued to keep her present.

She ruled as pharaoh. Not as queen. Not as regent. As pharaoh.

Tiye was the Great Royal Wife of Amenhotep III and one of the most politically influential women in Egyptian history, a foreign-born queen who rose to a position of such authority that foreign kings wrote to her directly, bypassing the pharaoh entirely, knowing that she was the one whose counsel shaped policy. She was not behind the throne. She was the throne's judgment.

Hatshepsut needs no second introduction, but her leadership deserves one. She did not merely govern well. She transformed the visual, economic, and architectural identity of her civilization. She sent trading expeditions to Punt that brought back wealth and wonder. She built Deir el-Bahari, a mortuary temple of such breathtaking elegance that architects study it to this day. She dressed in the regalia of kingship not as a costume but as a statement: leadership has no gender. It has only vision.

And Ahmose-Nefertari, again, because leadership, true leadership, is not a single act. It is a sustained commitment to something larger than oneself. She established foundations for female clergy, created systems for the redistribution of resources, and left behind a legacy so beloved that ordinary Egyptians placed her image in their homes for generations after her death.

She was not a leader of the powerful. She was a leader of the people.

Leadership, in the vocabulary of modern governance, has been redefined, not by theory, but by practice. By the women who have stepped into roles that did not previously include them and proceeded to redefine what those roles could accomplish.

In digital transformation, leadership is no longer measured solely by technical command. It is measured by the ability to translate complexity into clarity, to stand before a board and explain why a cybersecurity investment is not a cost but a covenant



**The So
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A woman with a blue and gold Egyptian headdress is the central focus, looking directly at the viewer. To her left, another woman's face is partially visible. The background is a dark wall covered in golden hieroglyphs and a golden ram's head sculpture. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the woman's features and the intricate details of her headdress.

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with the organization's future. It is the ability to build teams that think differently, govern ethically, and innovate responsibly. It is the courage to say, in rooms where speed is worshipped, that some things must be done slowly, carefully, and with full accountability to those who will live inside the systems being built. Women leading in this space are not doing so despite their histories. They are doing so because of them. Because they have navigated institutions that required them to be twice as prepared, twice as precise, and twice as visionary just to be taken at equal value. That navigation does not diminish a leader. It sharpens one.

The community dimension of leadership is perhaps its most ancient dimension. Tiye governed with an eye toward relationships, between Egypt and its neighbors, between the palace and the population, between power and responsibility. That relational intelligence is precisely what the digital age demands of its leaders: the understanding that a platform is a community, that data is a relationship, that governance is, at its foundation, an act of care. The queens of Kemet did not lead in isolation. They led in context, aware of the world around them, accountable to the people beneath them, and visionary enough to see beyond the horizon of their own reign.

That is the standard. It always was.

Leadership is not the act of being first. It is the act of making sure that those who come after you find the path clearer, the systems fairer, and the table larger than you found it. That is what the queens of Kemet did.

That is what the women of this edition are doing. And that is what the leaders of tomorrow, trained by their example, governed by their wisdom, resilient in their image, will continue.

The scent of Kemet does not belong to the past.

It is being worn, right now, by women who are building the future.

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The Scent of Kemet never fades with the century
resilience of a spirit that rises, and the l



عقل كيمييت لا تمحوه الق قود، وصمود روح تنهض، وأث

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