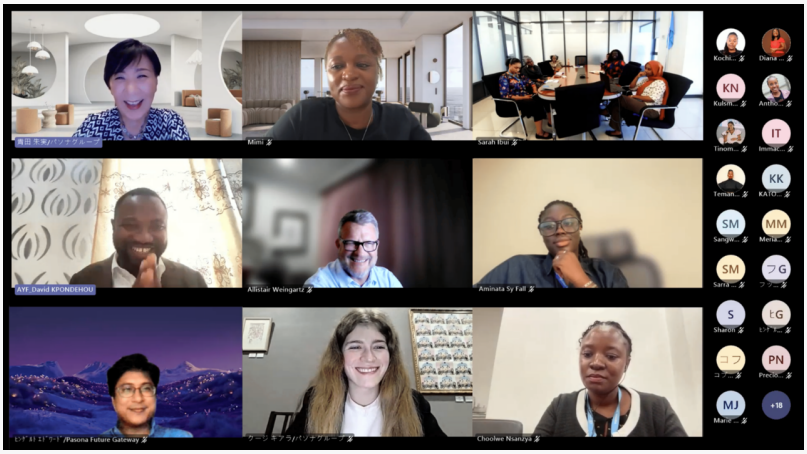
Pasona Group and UNDP Equip Young Leaders with Strategic Communication Skills

Joint masterclass connects young professionals from Africa, Japan, and beyond through storytelling, personal branding, and cross-cultural exchange



AWAJI CITY, HYOGO PREFECTURE, JAPAN, September 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Pasona Group Inc. and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) held a joint virtual Leadership Series masterclass on August 27, bringing together fellows from the Awaji Youth Federation (AYF), supported by Pasona Group, and the UNDP African Young Women Leaders (AfYWL) Fellowship Programme.

Awaji Youth Federation is a global fellowship program and community first launched by Pasona Group in 2017. To date, over 100 young professionals, creatives, and innovators from over 50 countries and regions have gathered on Awaji Island in western Japan to develop projects addressing social issues and regional revitalization.

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>
> *Ms. Rania Hadra, Regional Advisor at the UNDP Regional Programme for Africa*

Ms. Akemi Aota, President of the Awaji Youth Federation and Executive Officer of Pasona Group Inc., welcomed fellows of the AfYWL Fellowship Programme on behalf of AYF and Pasona Group, saying, "When I look at this group, I see more than participants in a program. I see women who will help shape the future of Africa. You share the courage to imagine what can be different and the determination to make that difference real."

Themed on "Storytelling, Personal Branding and Leadership", the online interactive session brought together 45 AfYWL fellows and 10 AYF fellows and alumni from diverse cultural and

professional backgrounds. Participants learned how to communicate their purpose, develop credible professional identities and build meaningful networks across Africa, Japan and beyond.

Ms. Rania Hadra, Regional Advisor at the UNDP Regional Programme for Africa, opened the session by explaining that leadership requires a clearly communicated vision, mutual trust, and the ability to bring people together to achieve tangible outcomes. "Leadership is not position, title or level," Ms. Hadra said. "It is having a clear vision, building trust, bringing people around the table and delivering to the communities and people who need us most."

Facilitating the masterclass was Ms. Mimi Kalinda, Group CEO and Co-Founder of Africa Communications Media Group, leading discussions on storytelling as a leadership tool for building trust, shaping public perception, and inspiring collective action. "Your personal brand is not what you think of yourself. It is what other people think—and, most importantly, what they say about you when you are not in the room," Ms. Kalinda said.

The masterclass was organized as part of the AfYWL Programme's Leadership Series, which connects fellows with accomplished leaders and experts through practical learning, candid conversations and peer exchange.

The continued collaboration between UNDP, AYF, and Pasona Group reflects a shared commitment to developing emerging leaders, promoting cross-cultural learning, and supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and Pasona Group's corporate philosophy of providing "Solutions to Society's Problems".

 Overview: African Young Women Leaders Fellowship Programme
The African Young Women Leaders Fellowship Programme is a joint initiative of UNDP Africa and the African Union Commission. It seeks to develop a new generation of African women leaders through practical professional experience, leadership development, mentorship and opportunities to contribute to sustainable development across Africa and beyond.
For more information, visit www.undp.org/africa/AfYWL.

 Overview: Awaji Youth Federation
The Awaji Youth Federation is an international community of young professionals based on Awaji Island, Japan. Supported by Pasona Group, the fellowship brings together globally minded young people to contribute to regional revitalization, innovation, entrepreneurship and community development. It promotes cross-cultural collaboration, professional growth and the development of solutions with both local and global impact.
For more information, visit awaji-youth-federation.com.

 Overview: United National Development Programme
UNDP is the leading United Nations organization working to end the injustice of poverty, inequality and climate change. Working with a broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries and territories, UNDP helps nations build integrated, lasting solutions for people and

the planet.
Learn more at undp.org or follow @UNDP and @UNDPAfrica.

 Overview: Pasona Group
Pasona Group is a Japanese multinational corporation specializing in human resource services. The company supports workforce development, inclusive employment and initiatives that address social challenges. On Awaji Island in Hyogo Prefecture, Pasona Group has undertaken a range of activities promoting regional revitalization, innovation, arts and culture, wellness and the development of global talent.
For more information, visit www.pasonagroup.co.jp/english/.

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