

Margaret Lance
Waverley Care
Scottish Women's Convention International Women's Day Celebrations

Good afternoon sisters. It is a wonder pleasure and honour to be invited as a speaker to share my journey with you today. My name is Margaret lance and I work for Waverley care-a Scottish wide organisation supporting people living with HIV/HepC. You can find more information on our website: www.waverleycare.org

"I have come from a completely different life in Cameroon to build a future in Scotland where I have experienced challenges, and learned that too many women continue to suffer inequality, poverty, racism, sexism, violence, and exclusion despite being in one of the richest countries in the world. I have seen the power of women when they work together to claim their rights through not-for-profit organisations, trade unions, faith groups, and community projects like the one I work for. Some of the women I meet have nothing except their will to survive and determination make a better life for their children, against all the odds. I salute their resilience and will always offer them my solidarity, sisterhood, love, and respect. In turn, I have received support from women at many of the most difficult times in my own life."



Today, I am humbled to share examples of some of the women who have supported me along my journey to be where I am now. I suppose we have all or been supported or supported someone at some point and how it feels to be supported. Well, I don't know about you, but many women have supported me in different ways from childhood through my teenage life and today as a grown woman. It feels great to have all these wonderful people in my life. I would start with my family: - my mother, sisters, friends, colleagues, community leaders, my coaches, and most especially the women I work with day to day. Their different stories, lived experiences, fantastic ideas, verbal and written messages have kept me going. I am amplified and encouraged by those who take my calls, attend meetings, bring up great ideas to challenge me to think and do things differently. Their support has made me a stronger and better person. I want to thank you all.

We might be different in detail but the same in so many ways because we share so much in common.

As there are seasons of the year, we all have our seasons of life and each season is never the same. Whatever our situation, we must never give up or be too harsh on ourselves. We are here today because of those who started the struggle to make women's voices heard: – the suffragettes, the march of women to Versailles demanding equal pay for women. We cannot give up because we have come a long way and still have much work to do

We need to reflect on the legacy we want to leave to the next generation especially our young people

Mind-set: Working on our mind-set will enable us to challenge ourselves and learn from our mistakes for better growth.

We all cannot get into politics; however, we can volunteer, become activists or campaign and support a good course

Let us continue to support and uplift one another and must not doubt the power of our hidden potential neither should we doubt ourselves because where doubt resides, confidence cannot. Start by loving and believing in yourself because within you, there is a stronger you.

I would like to end by thanking the SWC and their small but hard-working team for putting this event together giving women from all walks of life and background to come and share and learn new knowledge.

Dear sisters I want to assure you that as women we are stronger together.

Thank you.

