

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **SkyTeam's 2025 RISE Women's Leadership Development Program Takes Off**

**Nairobi, Kenya, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025.....** SkyTeam Alliance's RISE Women's Leadership Development Program, an initiative to increase female representation in aviation, kicked off its 2025 edition on 3<sup>rd</sup> March with a two-day event in Nairobi, Kenya. The event, hosted by Kenya Airways, brought together 22 of the 28 total program participants from across the alliance's global member airlines.

Sky Team Alliance launched the RISE initiative in 2022 to align member airlines with **IATA's 25by2025**. The initiative aims to increase female representation by 25% across all levels, including senior leadership, as well as underrepresented positions in various departments; with participants officially beginning their 9-month program during the event held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Speaking at the event, Allan Kilavuka, Kenya Airways MD & CEO said "Kenya Airways is dedicated to fostering diversity as a foundation for a stronger, more innovative aviation industry. We are committed to building a future where leadership is defined by talent, skill and vision- and not gender. Through sponsoring RISE 2025, we are honored to play a critical role in creating opportunities for women and driving gender equality across the aviation sector; taking note that women are not only shaping the present but are defining the future of aviation."

The third RISE cohort represents diverse functional roles in aviation across operations, finance, commercial, human resources and more, with Kenya Airways being this year's executive sponsor. Themed '*Career Progression Through Elevation of Leadership Skills*,' the 2025 curriculum will cover three educational blocks:

1. *'How to be a mindful, impactful and inclusive leader';*
2. *How to lead effective conversations and convey your story'; and*
3. *'How to drive structural change in your organization.'*

SkyTeam's Managing Director & CEO, Patrick Roux stated "No one can drive change alone: that's why alliances are so important. Advancing gender equity in aviation, especially for women in leadership, requires collective effort and at SkyTeam we consider this an important responsibility. Together with our member airlines and through initiatives like RISE, we can transform the industry—one step at a time."

"As the RISE program enters its third year, its mission remains just as relevant as ever. While progress has been made, women in aviation still face barriers to career advancement and underrepresentation continues to be a challenge. At SkyTeam, we are inspired by the level of engagement in prior years and are applying key learnings to continuously evolve the program. Our goal is to make RISE as impactful as possible for the incredible leaders in our 2025 cohort, with an eye on program longevity and growth in the future," added Ms. Evgenia Starkova, SkyTeam Vice President of Marketing & Sustainability and RISE 2025 Sponsor.

This year's 28 RISE participants will progress through the program's education blocks in the coming months, completing the curriculum in November 2025. The culmination of the program will be a practical project focused on developing a personal leadership action plan that participants can use as a catalyst for continued advancement after the program concludes.

**-Ends-**



### **About Kenya Airways:**

Kenya Airways (KQ), *The Pride of Africa*, is a leading African carrier on a mission to propel Africa's prosperity by connecting its people, cultures, and markets. We fly to 44 destinations worldwide, 36 of which are in Africa, connecting over 5 million passengers and over 70,000 Tons of cargo annually through our Hub at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

As the sole African carrier in the SkyTeam Alliance, we open up a world of possibilities for our customers, connecting them to over 1,060 destinations in 173 countries. We take pride in offering a delightful flying experience with a caring African touch. Our exceptional African hospitality has consistently earned us global recognition, including the prestigious Skytrax World Airline Awards where we were honored with the Best Airline Staff and Best Airline Cabin Crew in Africa in 2024. In addition, we were ranked Top Employer of the Year by The Employers Institute and the Africa Leading Airline at the World Travel Awards 2024.

For more information, visit [www.kenya-airways.com](http://www.kenya-airways.com) or call our 24-hour Customer Services Desk at +254 20 327 4747. We are also available on Twitter: @KenyaAirways & @KQSupport, Facebook: @OfficialKenyaAirways, and Instagram: @OfficialKenyaAirways.

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### **About RISE: Reach, Inspire, Soar and Empower**

RISE was created to take female leadership to new heights across SkyTeam and its members. Since its launch in 2022, the program has aimed to foster greater inclusivity within our member airlines and the broader aviation industry. SkyTeam was the first airline alliance to unanimously commit to IATA's 25by2025 initiative in 2021, and the RISE program has since supported our members in advancing this commitment.

Through a series of development opportunities, training sessions and practical assignments, RISE is designed to empower high-potential female leaders to strengthen their communication, management and leadership skills. The program seeks to nurture talent, accelerate career growth and encourage participants to serve as role models, paving the way forward for future generations of women in the aviation industry.

SkyTeam will continue to grow and evolve RISE in the future by expanding its target audience and diversifying the program's themes.

### **About SkyTeam**

SkyTeam is the global airline alliance dedicated to transforming the future of travel by powering the smartest and most integrated customer journey. With a focus on innovation and responsibility, SkyTeam and its members work together to connect customers across an extensive global network of 1,000+ destinations. SkyTeam offers 750+ airport lounges, award-winning SkyPriority airport services and makes travel more rewarding through its members' loyalty programs. SkyTeam members are Aeroflot (suspended), Aerolíneas Argentinas, Aeromexico, Air Europa, Air France, China Airlines, China Eastern, Delta Air Lines, Garuda Indonesia, Kenya Airways, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Korean Air, Middle East Airlines, SAS, Saudia, TAROM, Vietnam Airlines, Virgin Atlantic and Xiamen Airlines.