

# Sophie Ikenye

 By Leigh Andrews

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As BBC World News celebrates its 25th anniversary this month, *Focus on Africa* presenter Sophie Ikenye exclusively shares her favourite BBC story she's covered, as well as top media trends to watch out for in 2016.

Back in 1991, World Service Television (known as BBC World News today) launches with its first half-hour bulletin across Europe. Just a few months later, BBC World Service Television became a 24-hour channel, and the channel became available in Africa for the first time in 1992. Now, in March 2016, BBC World News celebrates its 25th anniversary with record figures of 85 million viewers per week. To highlight this important milestone, I chatted to Sophie Ikenye, London-based presenter of the *Focus on Africa* show on BBC World News, about one of the most significant news stories she's covered in her BBC career and her daily on-the-job stresses...

## 1. Tell us more about the specific story featured in this image.



Training with the First Lady

**Ikenye:** This photo, taken with Kenya's First Lady Margaret Kenyatta, was during her training in 2014 for the London Marathon. It's the first time a first lady from the continent had run a marathon. I joined her during a morning training session at Hyde Park.

## 2. Quite the scoop! Give us a brief overview of your personal story – your studies and career highlights package so far.

**Ikenye:** Prior to joining the BBC, I trained as a radio and TV journalist in Kenya. I then went on to work as a news presenter at the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC). I've also been a radio news editor for Radio Citizen and worked as a news anchor for Kenya's NTV.

I spearheaded the coverage of the 2013 Kenya elections that were keenly watched across the world. I have also interviewed more than ten African presidents, among them Liberia, Senegal, Niger, Djibouti, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique and Ghana.



Ikenye

I enjoy speaking to young people who are making a difference in their societies or are just making time for other people.

### 3. What else do you enjoy most about your daily duties, and which aspects cause you the most stress?

**Ikenye:** The editorial discussions and where we want to go with a story is always exciting. Speaking to various significant players in the stories we carry is quite exciting, too. I get a bit distressed when big-name interviews are cancelled or when technology fails us.

### 4. Understandably, especially as media's one of the fastest-changing industries thanks to the fast-pace of technological change that disrupts the news flow and traditional methods of reporting. Elaborate on the specific journalism/media trends you're most looking forward to in the industry this year.

**Ikenye:** Keeping up to speed with the changing dynamics of news dissemination. Digital platforms are going to play a key role in the future of reporting. Audiences are also changing the way they perceive journalists. The more we live the story, the more believable we are. Short, sharp news updates will also be the norm in future because of the audiences' busy lifestyles.

*In closing, Ikenye says: "Everyone has a story to tell, even those who cannot speak."*

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## ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh\_Andrews.

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