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JULY 2019

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AND PETITE NOIR

5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# 30 under 30

120 ENTREPRENEURS, INNOVATORS AND  
GAME-CHANGERS ACROSS FOUR CATEGORIES:  
BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY, CREATIVES AND SPORT



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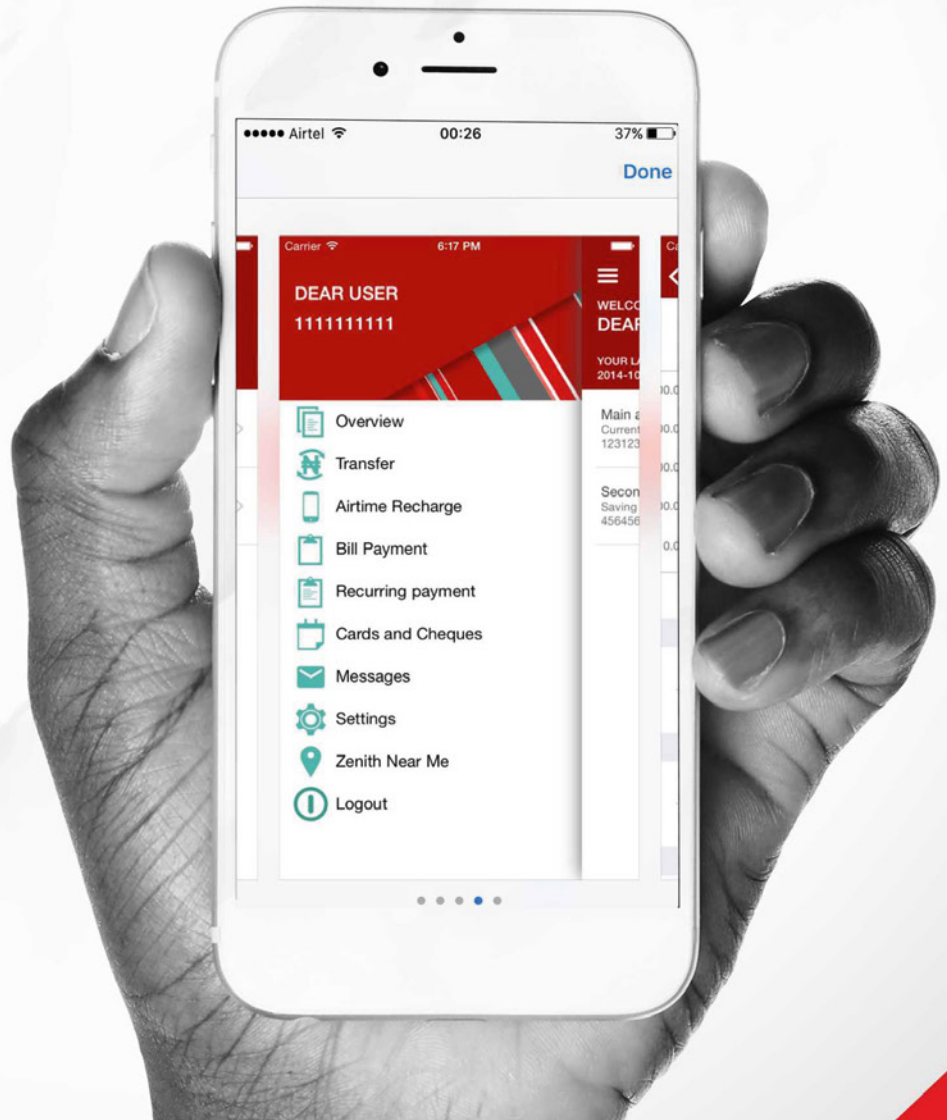
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# 30 under 30

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This year marks the fifth milestone annual FORBES AFRICA 30 under 30 list. Together, there are 120 achievers under the age of 30 in total, with 30 in each of the four sectors: business, technology, creatives and sport. Meet the class of 2019, a stellar collection of entrepreneurs and innovators rewriting rules and taking bold new risks to take Africa to the future.

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TECHNOLOGY: ERIC MULI, NTHABISENG MOSIA  
AND COURTNEY BENTLEY

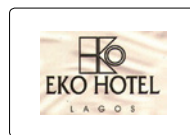
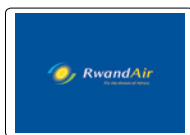


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## YOUTH RISING

BY MOTLABANA MONNAKGOTLA

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**Southern Africa:** sikona.cibini@abn360.com +2711 384 0502

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**LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN**

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Motlabana Monnakgotla  
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ABN Publishing, South Africa: 4th Floor, West Tower,  
Sandown Mews, 88 Stella Street, Sandton, South Africa, 2196. Contact: +27 (0)11 384 0300  
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"Entrepreneurs need to understand how critical it will be for our 21st century economic success that we do not just prepare young people to *take* jobs, but to *create* jobs."



KINGDOM BUSINESS NETWORK



# LEADING AFRICA'S TOMORROW

**T**HAT AFRICA has the world's youngest population is nowhere more immediately obvious than on the streets of Sandton, famously known as the continent's richest square mile, where a stroll in this prime South African real estate is a lesson in both urban attitude and designer fashion – the young sport both with candor.

It's almost as if professional trend forecasters have run out of alphabets to describe today's hyperconnected youth – they are Generations Y (the millennials born in the mid-80s) and Z (the post-millennials), and before you know it, Generation Alpha (children of the millennials) will also be ready to make its precocious presence felt in the economy.

One of these leafy Sandton streets I referred to earlier lead to the offices of FORBES AFRICA, where every day, I experience this inimitable force called the plugged-in African youth. The team at FORBES AFRICA is mostly under 30, and I inadvertently yield every day to the reality of 'reverse mentoring' – there is more I gain from my rarified interactions with this up-to-date generation.

Therefore, on Youth Day on June 16, celebrated in South Africa every year with a public holiday, I found myself at a plush four-star hotel in Sandton, not far from work, attending an organized debate between 10 schools drawn from the country's nine provinces.

There was plentiful verve, vocabulary and vocal skills on display in this ballroom, filled with uniformed students oozing boundless energy and making war cries about national progress and reform. I have been in innumerable debates in my college years, but the topics discussed by today's students are not for laymen or laggards. They go from AI and algorithms to big data and climate change.

"We should talk about benefits versus harm. Just because you have robots does not mean societal values won't exist," fired away one breathless speaker, profoundly concerned about what governments and technological advancements can do for humanity.

I was seated with the team from the Western Cape province, and the bespectacled 17-year-old next to me sighed: "I am worried about the future." I asked him why. When I was his age, I don't ever recall using the word 'worry'; our pre-internet adolescent years were so much more untainted and carefree. "It's hard not to be," the student continued to lament. "We know for a fact that there will be no jobs like accounting as the robots will take them away. There is so much pessimism all around, the media makes sure you can't escape that."

So he would like to be a farmer, he said. "Green jobs, such as sustainable farming, will be the only kind of jobs that automation won't take away. We will all do more purpose-driven jobs in an economic environment where careers are uncertain." There was heated discussion in the room that day, but you could sense the solidarity between the different school groups. Their competition, another student told me, is not each other, but the ubiquitous robots they see coming.

Hence, this special issue of FORBES AFRICA, on the continent's smartest under 30 achievers, devoted to young people who are forever taking bold risks and living life on the edge.

The list, curated by Karen Mwendera, supported by Unathi Shologu, and creatively led by Lucy Nkosi – who came up with four stunning cover looks expertly shot by Motlabana Monnakgotla, is to affirm to the world about Africa's tomorrow, the go-getters stridently chasing success and societal change, and redefining business and innovation to better the world. The list is only a subset of the greater population of young African achievers shaking up sectors, and is only the beginning of more to come. The youth are on the cusp of something new and great, and I am all ears. 📧

RENUKA METHIL,  
MANAGING EDITOR

letters@abn360.com  
www.forbesafrica.com



Photo by Motlabana Monnakgotla

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AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK



NYUNGWE NATIONAL PARK



VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK



LAKE KIVU



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT IN KIGALI

# RWANDA'S TOP 5 DESTINATIONS

## VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

Two and a half hours north of Kigali you will find Volcanoes National Park, home to most of the world's remaining mountain gorillas. Rwanda is among only three countries in the world where you can trek to see the majestic gorillas up close – a truly once in a lifetime experience.

## LAKE KIVU

Kivu is one of Africa's Great Lakes, with deep emerald-green waters and a shoreline of magnificent mountains and fishing villages. The lake is dotted with uninhabited islands that can be explored by boat and provide the perfect location to relax and enjoy the peace of Rwanda's countryside.

## NYUNGWE NATIONAL PARK

Nyungwe is one of the oldest rainforests found anywhere on the continent. The lush, green forest is home to over 300 bird species and 13 primate species including chimpanzees and

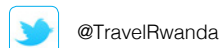
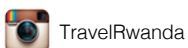
colobus monkeys. Take a stroll through the canopy along a 70m high walkway for exhilarating views of the rainforest.

## AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK

Rwanda's largest national park is home to a diverse array of plant and animal life. The lakes, papyrus swamps, savannah plains and rolling highlands make Akagera an incredibly scenic reserve. The park is home to the elusive Shoebill stork, seven newly introduced lions, elephant, leopard and the shy but stunning roan antelope.

## KIGALI

Rwanda's capital provides the perfect backdrop for a weekend getaway. As one of the safest cities in Africa, Kigali is quickly becoming a favourite for East African and international tourists. Savour the tastes of international cuisine at the city's best restaurants and enjoy live music at the many clubs and bars in Kigali.



# BUILDING CULTURAL BRIDGES IN BUSINESS

BY RAKESH WAHI, FOUNDER AND PUBLISHER, FORBES AFRICA

**I**T IS NO SECRET THAT THE WORLD of business today is seamless like a village marketplace. We often talk about diversity but forget that one of the key ingredients is learning from each other's cultures. Having traveled to over 80 countries and worked in over half of them has given me some advantages in understanding how culture impacts the way we conduct ourselves, particularly in business. In the Middle East, Asia or Africa, taking time for introductions can seem inordinately long, and perceived disrespect towards elders in a boardroom dynamic can often lead to disagreement because of form rather than substance.

Some Korean corporations mastered the art of business development through cultural understanding; they would send their top executives on a six-month holiday to the country they would be posted in. During this paid vacation, they were to learn the language, travel throughout using public transportation, engage with the people, participate in national celebrations and understand the work culture. This integration was necessary when the tools were limited; now, a lot can be learned online. The human interface, however, remains the most complex in interpersonal relationships.

Having lived in the UAE for 30 years, I was often exposed to the concept of a *majlis*; by definition, a "place of gathering", to discuss matters common to a group. In India, these were known as *darbars*, which was also a word used in the military when a senior officer could gather the troops for feedback on administrative matters. The format of these gatherings were informal but followed the direction of the senior presiding member who would set the tone and direction for the discussion. This is no different from panel discussions before an audience or closed-door discussions following Chatham House rules.

Aren't these intriguing values in modern times where the younger generation resorts to online chat groups etc?

The government of Dubai has been a strong proponent of cultural diversity and once again, took the lead by bringing a 'World Majlis' to Rwanda on March 26 to discuss borderless talent. I was requested to join the discussion along with His Excellency Hazza Mohammed Al-Qahtani, the UAE's first ambassador to Rwanda, Najeeb Mohammed Al-Ali, Executive Director of Expo 2020, Claudette Irere, the Permanent Secretary in the ICT Ministry in Rwanda, Mohammed Al Kamali, the Deputy CEO of Dubai Exports, Adam Jones, Vice President at Mastercard, and Mohammed Dewji, Africa's youngest billionaire from Tanzania, among many others, including a few students.

The conversation was very topical and we all contributed to the



discussion through the varied experiences of government, the private sector and academia. What left a lasting memory however was the effort made by members of our global society to introduce a cultural bridge to engage on a subject that everyone was interested in. George Ndirangu, a journalist with the *BBC*, was our moderator and did not fail to recognize me as his former mentor when he spent some time with *CNBC Africa* in Rwanda. There was no formality, the audience was limited but what was important was the content and whether it met the desired outcome.

The different views on the seamless flow of talent resulted in an intense conversation. My own perspective has largely come from experience over the last 40 years.

Having lived in Dubai for so long, the first thought that comes to mind is the statement made by the emirate's ruler, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum – "I want only the best" – a directive which resulted in the creation of the world's most modern and progressive city. Dubai was built by highly-skilled members in a homogeneous society of 200 nationalities welcomed by a leader who understood the need for borderless talent.

The first need, therefore, is leadership.

The next is the form of government. In democratic countries, there is the government's perspective, where high unemployment levels restrict the flow of competent people through protective policies similar to restrictive trade agreements; decisions that impact the ballot. The other is from the private sector where indigenization is a need, as expatriate costs and continuity are long-term risks. In our small but high-impact businesses, we have over the years trained local staff in most businesses. However, in our education business, we see the need to bring qualified academics to educate staff and students in emerging markets; perhaps a model of teacher training is most appropriate. We also discussed other challenges impacting mobility that included visa restrictions and high personal taxes. There was however, no disagreement that cross-fertilization is critical for the development of skilled resources and that there is no one-size-fits-all model of engagement.

The *majlis*, *darbar* or Chatham House rules all serve one purpose; engage interested parties on a subject that will be for the common good. The dialogue then becomes a point for implementation of ideas through the offices of those that can bring about change. The format was well-received in Rwanda and I hope we are able to use this platform, along with so many other befitting models of engagement, in other discussions on the continent. **P**



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# BRIEF 360



## SOUTH SUDAN IN CRISIS

The South Sudanese Civil War, an ongoing conflict in South Sudan between forces of the government and opposition forces, descended into a bloody situation where more than 100 people were killed, and the bodies were thrown in the river Nile. Dozens of female doctors were raped as part of the war, according to *India Today*.

In December 2018, as part of the economic crisis, the prices of bread tripled which initiated a wave of protests across the country for the resignation of President Omar al-Bashir.

After months of protests, Bashir was arrested in April and removed from power in a military coup announced by Sudanese defence minister, Awad Mohamed Ahmed Ibn Auf.

In just weeks, the wave of optimism which filled the capital Khartoum had been replaced with bloodshed.

At least 118 people were killed, according to the Central Committee of Sudan Doctors, when the ruling military council opened fire on pro-democracy protesters.

Activists claim that hospitals and schools have been attacked, dozens of female doctors raped, and many bodies dumped in the river Nile.

Now, different para-military groups are at war and in disagreement with each other leaving the citizens vulnerable.

Sudan is sliding into a “human rights abyss”, UN experts said, calling for an independent investigation.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF VIOLENCE DECREASES

Last month, the Global Peace Index was published by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP). The report ranked 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness.

South Africa's peacefulness ranking was at 127, down two in the world, and 32 in sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa is also in the last 20 countries in terms of societal safety and security.

Globally, more than 400 million people live in areas with low levels of peacefulness and high risk

from climate change. Eight of the 25 least peaceful countries have 103 million at risk in high climate hazard areas.

Regionally, sub-Saharan Africa has the weakest coping capacity for climate hazards, which could exacerbate violent conflicts.

The economic impact of violence on the global economy has decreased for the first time since 2012, amounting to \$14.1 trillion in 2018, or 11.2% or \$1,853 for every person.



## LION KING PROFITS TO CONSERVATION?

The second *Lion King* movie is due for release this month and wildlife conservationists are urging Disney to share its billion-dollar profits to fund wild lion conservation in Africa.

Projections suggest that the photorealistic animated remake of the original 1994 Disney film is set to make over \$200 million in its opening weekend and top the \$8 billion grossed by the original *Lion King* franchise.

Disney has announced while it has already donated \$1.5 million to the Lion Recovery Fund, it plans to raise \$1.5 million through its ‘Protect the

Pride’ campaign, totalling a \$3 million donation to lion conservation.

But conservation groups are calling this a “shamefully cheap gesture”, saying that \$1.5 million is less than 0.02% of the *Lion King* franchise profits and that the Disney Conservation Fund donations since 1995, a total \$13 million, is less than 0.2% of *Lion King* profits. Threats to the species include the growing lion bone trade in Asia; livestock and human encroachment into lion habitat; human-lion conflict and trophy-hunting.



## MOBILE NETWORK TO RAISE \$1BN IN LONDON FLOAT

Africa's second-largest mobile operator will list in London this month to raise \$1 billion to cut its debt pile, *The Telegraph* reported.

Airtel Africa, owned by India's Bharti Airtel, has almost 100 million subscribers in 14 sub-Saharan countries, with Nigeria accounting for

more than a third of the total.

It plans to issue new shares on the main market of the London Stock Exchange, with a free float of at least 25pc. It is also considering a listing in Nigeria.

The float comes after the firm raised \$1.25 billion last year from six big investors including SoftBank and Temasek, valuing it at about \$4.4 billion. Its debt stands at about \$4 billion.



## TECH TO PREDICT GLOBAL WATER CONFLICTS

Artificial intelligence can predict where conflicts over scarce water will break out up to a year in advance and allow action to prevent them, researchers announced last month, *Reuters* reported.

An early warning tool that tracks water supplies worldwide and mixes in social, economic and demographic data to flag up potential crises is being developed by the Netherlands-based Water, Peace and Security partnership (WPS).

During tests, the system predicted more than three quarters of water-related conflicts in Mali's Inner Niger

Delta, said WPS, which plans to launch it globally later this year:

Climate change often impacts on water – from driving droughts to sea level rises – which in turn can fuel clashes over diminishing resources and force people to migrate from their home areas.

Previous attempts to predict crises have often failed because the causes of conflict are so varied and can be very locally specific.

The WPS said their tool is a step forward as it draws together advances in remote sensing, machine learning and big data processing to provide alerts that can be acted upon. rights!"

## EGYPT TRIES TO STOP KING TUT SALE

Christie's in London is being pressured to cancel the auction of a statue of Tutankhamun's head after Egyptian authorities claimed it might have been stolen from the Karnak temple in Luxor, *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* reported.

The 28.5cm-high statue is more than 3,000 years old and "exudes strength and serenity", according to the Christie's listing.

Christie's plan to sell the bust as part of the private Resandro collection, which will be auctioned off this month. Other items include marble heads dating from ancient Rome, a painted wooden Egyptian coffin, and a bronze Egyptian cat statue.

They hope to raise £4 million from the auction, and insist that it is being sold legitimately.

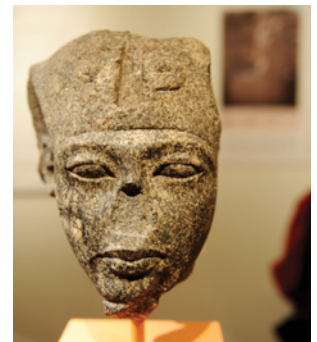
"Ancient objects by their nature cannot be traced over millennia," said a spokeswoman for Christie's.

"It is hugely important to establish recent ownership and legal right to sell which we have clearly done. We would not offer for sale any object where there

was concern over ownership or export," she said.

But Egyptian officials have called on Christie's to prove the statue left the country legally.

"We will do our best to stop this auction immediately," said Dr Mostafa Waziri, the head of Egypt's Supreme Council for Antiquities. "We will talk to the Egyptian foreign ministry and our ambassador in London to do our best to stop it, as we have to check."



## GOOGLE THIS!

Google Drive is a place to store all your files, and Google Photos is a place to store all your photos. On the surface, having these two Google services integrate somewhat makes sense, but last month, Google announced that this integration would be ending soon, citing user feedback that the integration was "confusing."

Starting this month, the two services will be separate with photos in one service no longer moving over to the other.

Google has a support page up detailing how the transition

will work. The Drive and Photos integration will be turned off July 10, at which point the Drive 'Google Photos' folder will no longer represent your Google Photos collection. Your files will be left alone, but uploads, changes, and file deletions will stop being synced across the two services.

On the mobile side of things, this change also means the Google Photos app will no longer automatically sync your smartphone pictures to Drive, where they can be automatically downloaded to your computer.

- Compiled by Unathi Shologu

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**Councillor Herman Mashaba,**  
Executive Mayor of the  
City of Johannesburg

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Announced on 1 December 2016 the Inner City

Construction Site Project seeks to take back the city, hijacked by criminal syndicates, and use this an opportunity to provide low-cost affordable housing, student accommodation and rental space for SMMEs. It also aims to attract investments back into the inner city; and create employment opportunities and artisan training.

Many of the large corporates located down town have also committed to re-investing in the area. The City has recently witnessed the private sector, on their own, investing for the first time since 1994 in excess of R2 billion.




“Turning Joburg into a construction site is a practical way of realising Mandela’s dream.”

The City is making available buildings for development by means of long-term lease agreements, with an option to purchase once development is complete. Properties have been zoned for mixed use and developers, entrepreneurs and visionaries are encouraged to show how they will convert these into smart work spaces, offices, retail spaces, social housing and student accommodation.

Let the City make your business dreams come true through a mutually beneficial partnership. If you are looking for a site to build your shisa nyama empire; dreaming of building your own call centre; looking for a space to build our media production business; or want a property portfolio then the City can help you.

As the Executive Mayor explains: “It’s so easy. All you need to do is come with your bravery, with your ideas and plans. Show us how you will convert disused buildings into high-quality offices, retail spaces, low-cost housing and student accommodation. In return, the City offers you rates and tax breaks, staggered discounted rental and other incentives. And we also guarantee to fast-track town planning issues.

For more information, tender documents and planned site tours please visit: [www.jhbproperty.co.za](http://www.jhbproperty.co.za). Together, let us create a working Inner City that is cleaner and safer, and where residents and business prosper and flourish.



President Cyril Ramaphosa waves at supporters in Ellis Park Stadium in Johannesburg during ANC's final presidential election campaign rally

# ‘SOUTH AFRICANS LOVE MARTYRS’

The first 100 days of any presidency are often harshly scrutinized as they set the tone for what citizens expect. South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa is under the magnifying glass as all await his next tactical move.

BY UNATHI SHOLOGU

**A**T THE END OF MAY, SOUTH Africa's sixth democratically-elected president, Cyril Ramaphosa, took an oath of office at Loftus Versfeld Stadium in Pretoria. In his speech, he touched on many issues that resonate with South Africans, including corruption, poverty, equality and youth unemployment.

These burning matters prelude what is to be expected from him in his first 100 days in office.

Ramaphosa's period at the helm of power (before the elections) has been typified by repeated calls for a 'New Dawn'. It seems the man who made it to the 2019 *Time* magazine list of 100 Most Influential in the world has a laundry list of issues to attend to if he is to set the tone for the rest of his presidency.

The challenge that has deeply affected how South Africans and investors view the country is that of corruption.

"Let us forge a compact for an efficient, capable and ethical state, a state that is free of corruption, for companies that generate social

value and propel human development... We must be a society that values excellence, rewards effort and rejects mediocrity," Ramaphosa said at his inauguration on May 25.

In the first 100 days, analysts say he needs to demonstrate he is a proactive leader; one who takes decisive action to address the plight of those who live in a society as unequal as South Africa. The gaping chasm between the richest and poorest has widened since the end of apartheid 25 years ago. This information is not lost on citizens whose lived experiences and disenchantment were in evidence during the elections.

A specialist in social economic development and political commentator, Kim Heller, is of the view that Ramaphosa has some way to go to address the resolutions of his party, the African National Congress (ANC).

"There are critical social maladies that need to be treated with the urgency they deserve... One of the key things people are looking for is a decisive man and decisive leadership," she says.

Political analyst, Prince Mashele, ventures: "He is yet to act on resolutions because he is navigating complex political infighting in the ANC, which is why he can't move boldly and faster..."

Economic transformation has been seen to also imply redistribution of the means of production, which currently has been reiterated in the call for land redistribution without compensation. This is among the duties citizens and investors will keep a close eye on as it is a contentious matter.

Leading up to the elections, Ramaphosa said to apprehensive farmers, "the land reform process is something we should never fear. It is going to be done in terms of the constitution".

Heller says that, "the question of land is unresolved, despite very solid ANC resolutions from branches, and despite extensive consultation".

The president will have to choose whether he wants to be investor-friendly or whether he wants the interests of his own political party to find expression in policy.

"The investors have become the supreme branch of the ANC. So Ramaphosa certainly, is spending a lot of time on their concerns rather than ordinary people..." Heller says.

Mashele echoes: "He has been a market-friendly president. He has railed against his comrades calling for the nationalization of the [South African] Reserve Bank".

Another matter influencing investment into the country is red tape that inhibits instead of encouraging business. South Africa dropped from 34 out of 181 countries on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking in 2009 to 82 out of 192 countries last year, leaving the country trailing its African peers, including Mauritius (20), Rwanda (29) and Kenya (61).

In his address to the nation, Ramaphosa continued with the mantra *thuma mina* (which means 'send me') and committed to continue to build South Africa. In his rebuilding, he will have to take a closer look at the factors that infringe on those looking to



## ONE OF THE KEY THINGS PEOPLE ARE LOOKING FOR IS A DECISIVE MAN AND DECISIVE LEADERSHIP.

– KIM HELLER

conduct business while straddling the line in ensuring that (natural) resources are not further depleted while failing to trickle down to those who need it the most.

Heller is of the view that the expectations created by the president serve as a double-edged sword: "Some quarters have built him up to be the Messiah we have all been waiting for. He may have embraced that but it's actually going to damage him. Because there is no individual who can save this country without looking at doing serious things in terms of economic restructuring... Until we address structural issues in this country, shifting the economy to favor ordinary people, not markets, we actually aren't very benevolent."


Also affecting business has been the view that South Africa is amongst the most corrupt on the continent and viewed as one of the murder capitals of the world. The Zondo Commission has illustrated the stark reality of the malfeasance the president will have to address to change these perceptions and in so doing, hold high-profile individuals accountable.

In line with building an equal society, the president made mention of the prevalence of violence against women at his inauguration.

"Let us end the dominion that men claim over women, the denial of opportunity, the abuse and the violence, the neglect, and the disregard of each person's equal rights. Let us build a truly non-racial society, one that belongs to all South Africans, and in which all South Africans belong. Let us build a society that protects and values those who are vulnerable and who for too long have been rendered marginal," Ramaphosa said.

Leading up to the resolution of the president's first 100 days in office, the public is watching with bated breath.

"I pity him. He's made big promises on housing and unemployment. Those are not going to magically change overnight. The problem with South Africa is that we love martyrs and here we have a president that we have martyred and who is actually going to fall on that. To replace one man with another, is not going to replace problematic policies, poor implementation and poor conceptualization of economic solutions. So I think in the next 100 days, I don't expect to see anything unless the fundamentals are changed," Heller says.

No doubt, it is going to take a concerted effort from all institutions, including those that have been revealed to be compromised. The first 100 days will certainly determine the rest of the president's term in office. 



# 30 Under 30

THE STARS OF TOMORROW YOU SHOULD KNOW TODAY

This year marks the fifth milestone annual FORBES AFRICA 30 under 30 list. Together, there are 120 achievers under the age of 30 in total, with 30 in each of the four sectors: business, technology, creatives and sport. Meet the class of 2019, a stellar collection of entrepreneurs and innovators rewriting rules and taking bold new risks to take Africa to the future. The list is in no particular order.

WORDS: KAREN MWENDERA  
EDITED BY: UNATHI SHOLOGU  
ASSISTANT: GARRETH MTUWA  
CREATIVE DIRECTION BY: LUCY NKOSI  
LEAD PHOTOGRAPHY BY:  
MOTLABANA MONNAKOTLA  
CO-PHOTOGRAPHY BY: GYPSEENIA LION



**Studio:** Keystone Studios; **Make-up:** Vanessa Unamaca; Audrey Mofokeng; Precious Xaba; **Styling:** Keabetswe Mafora; **Styling Assistant:** Thato Dladla; **Hair Stylists:** Okunubi Ibraheem Douglas; Kudakwashe Magora; **Clothes sourced from:** Maxhosa; B Bridal House; House of Ole; House of Uys; Hers His & Home; Converse; Pringle; Falke; Europa Art and Palladium

# THE MAKING OF The List

WORDS: KAREN MWENDERA

**T**HE FORBES AFRICA 30 UNDER 30 LIST IS THE most-anticipated list of game-changers on the continent and this year, we bring you 120 of Africa's brightest achievers under the age of 30 and for the first time, four categories featuring 30 in each: Business, Technology, Creatives and Sport.

From elevator manufacturing, solar energy design, to under-30s conquering the Alps and selling out the Apollo Theatre, this year's list demonstrates how enterprising and extraordinary the African youth is.

This list celebrates these pioneers who are building brands, creating jobs, and innovating, leading, transforming and contributing to new industries, in turn, changing the continent.

"The future belongs to Africa and the future belongs to its youth," says Jason Pau, Chief of Staff for International to billionaire Jack Ma, co-founder of Alibaba. He says the journey for young entrepreneurs, especially in Africa, is not always easy. Many startups fall by the wayside due to a lack of resources. In South Africa, it is estimated that the small enterprise failure rate is at almost 80% within the first three years.

Chances at success are very slim, yet Africans continue to see opportunity where many do not. The select few celebrated in this list represent those individuals who continue to persevere against the odds. It also serves as a reminder that *it is possible*.

"People don't really give enough time or spend enough time in providing the right environment for entrepreneurs to grow," Pau tells FORBES AFRICA.

So if entrepreneurship is the answer, ensuring that an environment is conducive for business sustainability is imperative.

Together with our audit partner for this list, SNG Grant Thornton, the senior editorial team worked night and day scrutinizing each candidate. For entrepreneurs, we delved into how profitable their businesses were and if they showed signs of potential growth and sustainability.

However, not only does the list look at the financial impact of each candidate, but also their reputation, resilience and ability to be role models to other young Africans.

For FORBES AFRICA, this meant endless background checks, fact-checks, emails, phone calls and research, sifting through over 1,000 nominations that poured in over the last few months. Lastly, the one factor that also played a role in the determination of the candidates

was their online presence. Followers are a valuable new currency, and today's achievers have found a way to leverage off them. This year, when FORBES named Kylie Jenner the world's youngest self-made billionaire, it observed that her business was built mainly because of her social media and fan following. Many on our list have also been able to build on this in their own way. The creatives and sport stars lead in this regard.

This year, Sport is the newest category, opening up the list to the game-changers who are also Africa's next generation of leaders. They have won awards, broken records, made social investments and pushed the boundaries by challenging the status quo on policies in sports. However, some of the challenges they still face include lack of resources, a gender pay gap, and an immense pool of untapped talent not yet given a chance to be in the limelight.

But no matter where they are from, these 120 list-makers share one common goal, and that is to build a better Africa.

Being an under-30 myself, I am proud to have curated the FORBES AFRICA 30 Under 30 class of 2019. At the time of going to press, all facts on the following pages were verified to be correct. 

## JUDGES OF THE 30 UNDER 30 CLASS OF 2019

The category experts whose role it was to survey all finalists of the 2019 30 Under 30 list, rank them and provide commentary on each candidate:

**BUSINESS:** Anthea Gardner, Founder and Managing Partner at Cartesian Capital

**TECHNOLOGY:** Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, Vice-Chancellor and Principal at University of Johannesburg; he also deputises President Cyril Ramaphosa on the South African Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

**CREATIVES:** Yasmin Furmie, creative and business partner of fashion brand SiSi The Collection, South Africa

**SPORT:** Nick Said, the Africa sports correspondent for Thomson Reuters

**AUDIT PARTNER:** SNG Grant Thornton

## 1 | Bruce Diale, 29, South Africa FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR: BRUCOL GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Bruce Diale went from living on R10 (\$0.67) a day to founding a million-rand business.

Born and raised in the Limpopo province of South Africa, Diale comes from humble beginnings.

As a child, he prayed that one day he would be rich and his father would pick him up from school in an expensive car. That didn't happen.

Instead, he founded a business and was able to buy his own car.

With the R500 (\$33) given to him by his then girlfriend, and R3,000 (\$202) raised from his younger brother who sold his PlayStation, Diale founded Brucol Global Development in 2014.

It is an award-winning agricultural consulting company with the vision of innovating and revolutionizing the rural agricultural landscapes of Africa.

The company has created its patent product, Gardenizly, which Diale designed with his father.

It is a vegetable tower garden that uses minimal amount of water to produce leafy vegetables without the use of fertilizers.

Today, Diale is disrupting the

agriculture space.

"Brucol has grown significantly since its inception as it now operates in three provinces, employs 15 people and generates over R13 million (\$877,000) in turnover," he says.

This year, he plans to make R100 million (\$6.7 million) and finalize the creation of an agribusiness app to help people access funding support much easier.

Looking back at his struggles, he is thankful for the investments his then girlfriend, now fiancée, made.

"I had also read a lot of books about successful business people, so I was aware of the pattern of success and so was my fiancé. We would sit and laugh in the dark because we knew this was all part of the process and that one day someone would be reading our story on a FORBES magazine," he says.

Diale won the 2017 National Engen Pitch and Polish competition hosted by Engen and Nedbank.

His company was delegated as one of five companies to represent the South African Agribusiness sector at the 2018 Mozambique, Gaza Investment Conference.

## 2 | Terence Mathe, 29, Zimbabwe CO-FOUNDER: SOUTHERN INCINERATION SERVICES (SISCO) PBC

Ever wondered what happens to amputated limbs post-surgery? Well, Terence Mathe may have an idea.

He co-founded an incineration service for biomedical waste to hospitals, funeral parlors and clinics.

SISCO, as it is called, currently runs two incineration plants in Zimbabwe, Bulawayo; with collection points in Bulawayo, Gweru, Zvishavane, Beitbridge and Victoria Falls.

This is a combined capacity of handling 220 kg per hour of waste, he says.



"This year, SISCO will set up in Harare by constructing Zimbabwe's first smokeless, odorless, gas-powered incinerator with a combined capacity of 300 kg per hour, so as to expand our operations and cement our position as Zimbabwe's largest provider of incineration services," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

One of the biggest milestones he has had in the business was when he was called by the EU Election Observation Mission headquarters to provide incineration services for all their election tallies and other confidential information.

Mathe has also managed to maintain his full-time job as an auditor while running the successful business for three years.

He plans to leave his job this year and fully take on the business growing it to become Zimbabwe's largest bio-waste incineration business.

## 3 | Mariam Manack, 29, South Africa FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR: ITRAIN

Durban-born Mariam Manack is a sports scientist, nutritional advisor, fitness and lifestyle coach.

While working as a personal trainer in 2011, Manack became passionate about empowering women through health and fitness.

Without any gym equipment, she would train clients at home using her voice and her gift.

Soon her clientele grew and she knew it was time to set up something bigger.

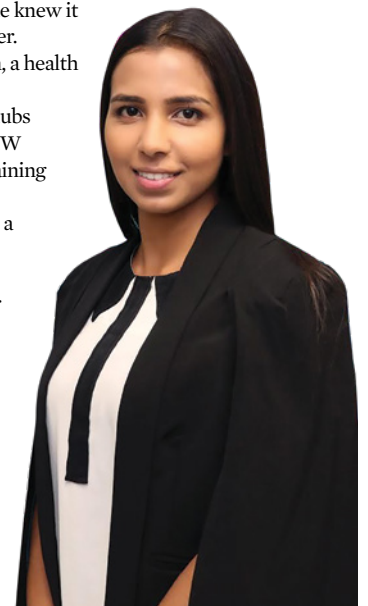
This led her to founding iTrain, a health and fitness studio for women.

She also hosts the iTrain run clubs yearly and has partnered with BMW Supertech group for sponsored training kits.

This year, she plans to open up a studio in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

She is also a brand ambassador for Puma.

In 2017, she was recognized by the Minara Chamber Of Commerce as the youngest Muslim woman to receive a finalist award at the Business Recognition Awards and the Minara Entrepreneurship Competition. The worth of her business is estimated to be R1.7 million (\$115,000).



**4 | Khanyisile Madonko-Nderezina, 25, Zimbabwe**  
**CO-FOUNDER AND CEO:**  
 SAKHILE MADONKO ENTERPRISES

Khanyisile Madonko-Nderezina has had a yen for entrepreneurship from a young age. He has explored various opportunities, from a sweet-selling business in Zimbabwe to founding a student café and restaurant in South Africa.

He figured out the pitfalls SMEs experience that lead to failure, so decided to establish a business that would help them grow.

Sakhile Madonko was founded in 2015 and provides strategy, consulting, business development and growth advisory for small businesses.

His business ventures have not been without their challenges.

“The biggest struggle has been gaining the same ear one would land as an older entrepreneur. Due to my age, many business ventures I had were affected because I was deemed too young,” he says.

“The only way we could prove ourselves was to work twice as hard and constantly prove ourselves despite the constant push-back in business from seemingly more seasoned entrepreneurs in the industry.”

It seems he has finally cracked the formula.

Sakhile Madonko has worked with a growing number of companies in the SADC region and partnered with the University of the Witwatersrand’s Development and Leadership Unit and consulted with over 80 students running businesses.

He employs four permanent staff and two consultants who regularly work with him, as well as interns who focus on analysis.

They have also launched an accelerator that helps students start and run viable businesses to help alleviate unemployment rates.

Madonko-Nderezina and his team hope to build 1,000 sustainable businesses by 2030. *The Star* named him one of the stars to watch for in 2018 alongside musician Sho Madjozi and other notable South Africans.



**“MANY BUSINESS VENTURES I HAD WERE AFFECTED BECAUSE I WAS DEEMED TOO YOUNG.”**

**5 | Isaac Mbatha, 28, South Africa**  
**FOUNDER AND CEO:**  
 SKY TENTS SA

When Isaac Mbatha was little, he used to sell sweets to his school mates to help his family. He now runs a tent business, empowering hundreds by donating tents, so they can hire them out for all occasions.

Born in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa, Mbatha has always had a knack for entrepreneurship. His dad owned a taxi business, a fleet of trucks and a filling station.

Mbatha started his first taxi business, owning seven vehicles in four years. With all the money saved, in 2015, Mbatha invested in Sky Tents.

“The company’s portfolio is diversified as we also supply mobile chillers/freezers, mobile toilets, and chairs and tables for a variety of functions,” he says.

The company has grown from employing three people to 59 today.

Mbatha has international clients including in Namibia,



Botswana, Nigeria, Algeria, Swaziland, Uganda, Lesotho, the Seychelles, Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

He also strives to give back to the community.

In 2017, he gave away 100 tents to disadvantaged areas to give other prospective entrepreneurs an opportunity at success. Mbatha believes tents are a big business and will continue to aim high.

**6 | Sadaam Suleiman, 28, Kenya**  
**CO-FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR:**  
 DRAGONFLY LIMITED



He rented a small corridor in Nairobi and converted it into an office with a staff of four, including himself.

Since then, the business has grown to a staff of 33 but on one condition; they have to wear comfortable crocs in the office, work hard and play hard.

DragonFly has worked with numerous brands including Nutella, LG and Sanlam.

Last year, Suleiman bagged a gold award at the Muse Creative Awards. The company’s star continues to rise.

“It has competed with multinationals and was recognized in 2017 as the eighth best agency in Kenya by the Association of Practitioners in Advertising,” he says.

Suleiman plans to open new offices in the East African region as well as invest in technology and innovation using artificial intelligence and machine learning.

In 2024, he plans to launch an incubation hub.

When Sadaam Suleiman was young, his dream was to own a car by the age of 20, and so he started to save towards it.

However, when he did reach his target amount, his mother advised him to invest the money and so he invested in a business.

In 2014, he registered DragonFly after noting a gap in the digital marketing field. It focuses on digital advertising, media, branding and public relations.

## 7 | Adeniyi Omotayo, 28, Nigeria FOUNDER AND CEO: BETENSURED GROUP

Adeniyi Omotayo used his \$250 savings to bet on life and founded a business.

It was 2015 and sports betting in Nigeria had become a new craze.

“There was an influx of betting companies in the Nigerian market around that time to capitalize on this opportunity,” he says.

As a result, he started Betensured Group, a sports prediction service developed and tailored for the Nigerian market.

“This system or website simplified sports betting information and predictions in such a unique way that even the ‘uneducated’ sports betting player could now gather significant information on upcoming sporting events to place guided sports betting and significantly minimize avoidable losses,” he tells FORBES AFRICA.

The bet paid off and Omotayo has been running Betensured for five years successfully.

They have over one million registered users from 70 countries. They also operate in eight different



languages and have expanded to Kenya.

One of their biggest highlights was securing an advertising deal for the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations with Multichoice (DStv).

Omotayo currently has a team of 23 employees.

“We are on course to have a physical presence in at least 10 other African countries before the end of 2020. We intend to break into the Asian and European markets. We also have a future projection of sponsoring a major European team in the near future,” he says.

## 9 | Ogechukwu Anugo-Obah, 28, Nigeria FOUNDER AND CEO: BODYLIKEMILK

If perseverance had a synonym, Ogechukwu Anugo-Obah would be it.

Having experienced abject poverty and dropping out of nursing school due to lack of finances, Anugo-Obah's dreams were close to shattered.

However, through entrepreneurship, she was able to find meaning and money.

Because she was unable to afford basic skincare products, she decided to make her own with her last N1,000 (\$3).

She packaged it and sold it to her first two clients in a small cup, for N2,500 (\$7).

In a month, she ended up selling 50 cups of the cream.

She expanded her range from just skin care products to facial, hair, makeup and fragrances.

With the rise in demand, she soon started delivering her products outside of West Africa, including Dubai, Germany, the UK, Ireland, France and South Africa.



In 2017, she also ran online training classes to teach other women about skincare manufacturing.

Anugo-Obah has been nominated for over 10 awards.

She received the Promising Young Entrepreneur of The Year 2018 award at The Next Titan Nigeria Top 18 Young Entrepreneurs Awards.

“Our goal is to be one of the top 10 world-class skincare and cosmetics brands. [We want] to expand our training centers in Nigeria and Ghana, train and empower over 20,000 women by 2023,” she says.

## 8 | David Kyalo, 29, Kenya FOUNDER AND CEO: KONCEPTS & EVENTS LTD

David Kyalo founded Concepts & Events Ltd in 2014 while studying at Kenyatta University in Kenya.

Being a student leader in charge of events and entertainment at the university, Kyalo grew passionate about his role and decided to register a business.

At the time, he and his partner only had \$15 to register the business and worked from one of the rooms at the university.

Their first project was to organize a kids' festival-themed event.

The event took place; however, the clients had swindled Kyalo and his partner of over \$2,000 because they did not sign a contract; a lesson well-learned for the young co-founders.

After that, they made sure to put in measures to bootstrap their business.

Concepts & Events now specializes in event-planning, catering, marketing and public relations.

Since then, they have worked on over 80 events, 35 marketing



projects and have won nine awards.

Some of the clients they have had include the World Bank Group and Red Cross.

Kyalo has seven full-time employees and over 10 on-contract employees, based on the magnitude of the project.

“[We want to] have more than 50% market share in Kenya in the next 10 years and be one of the best events and marketing companies in Africa in terms of profitability and quality delivery,” he says.

In one of his first features in a local Kenyan newspaper after the business started, Kyalo was asked if he had any won major awards yet.

He responded, “No major awards, not yet. But I should be on FORBES magazine soon”.

## 10 | Dorn Ndlovu, 26, South Africa FOUNDER AND CEO: ENTREPRENEUR BLUE PRINT AFRICA

Dorn Ndlovu founded his company, Entrepreneur Blue Print Africa, while running it from his dining room table.

He contacted several prominent African-based companies for funding, however none were fruitful.

“Every door I knocked at, I was sadly turned away with soul-shattering responses as to why they could not rally around my idea,” he says.

As a result, in the first year, he did not make a single cent.

Thereafter, he targeted government institutions and SMEs and in 2016, received his big break from a shipping company, the South African Maritime Safety Authority.

His business has since grown registering a turnover of R1 million (\$67,000) in 2017 and 2018.

Ndlovu's passion for entrepreneurship has also seen him becoming the director of his



brother's company, It's My Turn Trading And Projects CC, which specializes in engineering and construction.

He also became a shareholder in Joritans Logistics (Pty) Ltd, which deals with import and export of goods between Mozambique and South Africa.

When Ndlovu, who currently has 43 permanent employees, was asked what his long-term goal was, he said he plans to be on the cover of FORBES AFIRCA in 2020.

## 11 | Busi Mkhumbuzi Poee, 24, South Africa CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE: TSHIMONG

An activist in her maiden days, Poee once organized a protest through the streets of Johannesburg with girls wearing miniskirts made of recycled materials, speaking truth to power.

It is this activist in her she continues to pursue even in her entrepreneurship journey. Last year, she famously shared the stage with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, former US president Barack Obama, former South African first lady Graça Machel and South African entrepreneur Patrice Motsepe at the 16th annual Nelson Mandela Lecture hosted in Johannesburg.

The likes of businessman Richard Branson, former UN Secretary-Generals Ban Ki-moon and Kofi Annan were seated among the 15,000 in the stadium as Poee hosted the event, inspiring thousands.

She was 23 at that time; imagine how many more influential people she could be sharing the stage with in the next quarter of her life.

She is currently the co-founder of Tshimong, a social enterprise providing both the public and the private sector with services such as debating, public-speaking and leadership training programs in line with various social responsibility objectives.

Poee is passionate about the youth, and together with her co-founder, have partnered with a number of organizations to empower 3,000 youth in the last two years.

They plan to create an academy and curriculum specializing in debate-training for South African youth. Using her voice as a tool and her entrepreneurship as her journey, she is well on her way to influencing more youth as a global activist.

“Debating is a powerful, but unrecognized tool, that is uniquely suited to prepare any child for the world that does not exist yet,” she says.

## 12 | Sydney Sam, 26, Ghana FOUNDER AND CEO: WORKSPACE GLOBAL

In 2012, Sydney Sam taught himself graphic design, photography, videography and brand identity development to grow one of his first businesses, an underground live music and performance platform.

His work then caught the attention of other students, at the University of Ghana, who would seek his services and consultation to build their brands and products.

The exposure got him his first big client, UNICEF, in partnership with Publicis Africa Group.

By 2015, his business, Workspace Global, was up and running, from a humble Ghc800 (\$155) cash injection.

They specialize in graphic design, website design & development, print & branded materials, advertising, digital marketing (social media), photography and videography.

The business has grown internationally, with a team of 14 that operates digitally in various countries.

One of their major projects was for the World Bank in Washington DC to organize, brand and

document the 2016 African Mining Legislation Atlas Conference in Accra. They later went on to shoot documentaries in Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda.

“My grand vision for Workspace Global is to create a pan-African online digital service that offers the full range of branding & marketing services in an easy customer-centric web/mobile experience at the client’s fingertips,” says Sam.

Last year, Sam launched OPENSOURCE, a platform that promotes business and development discourse among millennials. In under a year they have trained 700 people and held 10 events.

Sam’s vision is to serve his country, continent and create opportunities for its people.



## 13 | Shirlene Nafula, 27, Kenya FOUNDER AND CEO: CRYSTAL RIVER PRODUCTS

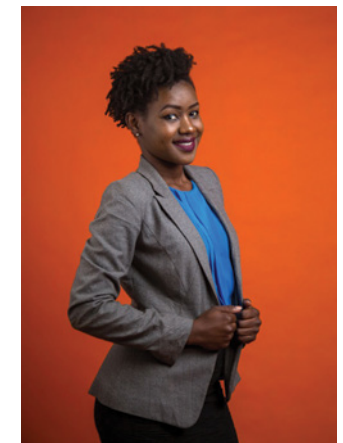
*Business Daily* named her one of the top 40 Under 40 Women in Kenya.

Never mind that, she was also recognized by the British High Commission among women leading British and Kenyan businesses in Kenya and across the Commonwealth countries.

At only 27, Shirlene Nafula has achieved this and more.

Four years ago, she founded Crystal River Products, a manufacturing company for bio-based beauty and hygiene products after mixing products from her parents’ dining room table.

Her company grew ten-fold and now she supplies her products to corporates and institutions including the office of the Deputy President of Kenya, William Samoei Ruto. Her products have been sold in Uganda and Tanzania.



Nafula, who is a scientist by profession, currently employs 21 people on an incentive model.

“In five years, we hope to have Crystal River Products having an established presence in Africa and in 20 years, have our products sold globally,” she tells FORBES AFRICA.



## 14 | Kgahlego Rasebotsa, 29, South Africa FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR: INTERIOR BUBBLE

Kgahlego Rasebotsa is a self-taught interior designer who went from selling scatter cushions in pop-up stores in Polokwane, South Africa, to designing offices for government officials.

After suffering depression from not being able to secure a job, entrepreneurship became her shining light when she started her interior design company three years ago.

Interior Bubble manufactures a range of office and home furniture and specializes in interior décor.

“My biggest highlight within my business definitely has to be the part where I get to transform clients’ houses into beautiful homes with our own handcrafted furniture pieces. Seeing the look on their faces always lights me up inside and motivates us to do better with our next job”

Rasebotsa currently employs eight people and plans to open a new



furniture store this year to showcase her interior décor and designs.

One of her biggest clients has been the Limpopo Economic Development Agency.

Her mission is to become a top furniture supplier to luxury homes in Africa.

## 15 | Kimani Adam, 29, Kenya CO-FOUNDER AND CEO: NATURE EXPEDITIONS DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

When Zimbabwean billionaire, Strive Masiyiwa, spoke to a group of graduates in 2015 at the Hult International Business School in the US, Kimani Adam was in the crowd. With ears and a mind wide open and eager to learn, Adam was inspired by Masiyiwa’s speech about starting your entrepreneurial journey now.

Without hesitation, Adam went on to start his own company in Kenya.

Using his personal savings and third-party angel capital, he founded Nature Expeditions Destination Management in 2015.

It is an African tour and photographic safari operator with offices in Rwanda, Seychelles, Mauritius, the US, Morocco, Uganda and Tanzania, with signed partnership deals in Asia and Canada.

The company worked in conjunction with his family business that was failing at the time, called Nature Expeditions Africa.



“I created a global expansion proposal to the board of the group, who were comprised of well respected ‘old school’ veterans in the hospitality industry; however, they didn’t believe in my proposal and rejected it,” he says.

He challenged them and implemented that proposal to create his global enterprise. His goal is to become an “industry powerhouse in the Africa and global photographic tour operator space”.

m7  
M7 Robotics

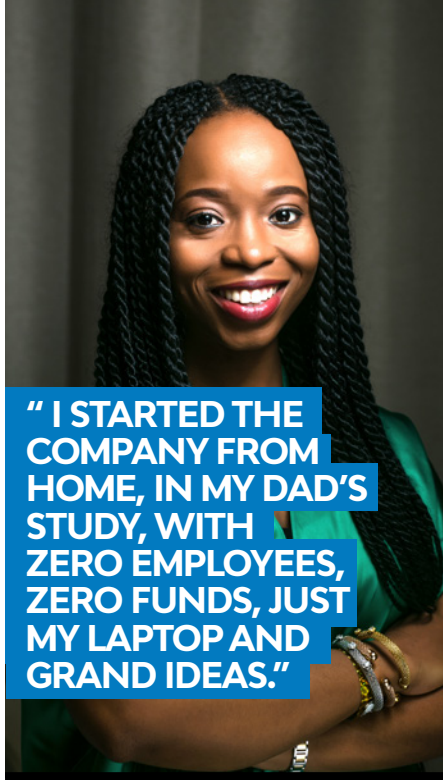
### WHAT WE DO:

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**“ I STARTED THE COMPANY FROM HOME, IN MY DAD’S STUDY, WITH ZERO EMPLOYEES, ZERO FUNDS, JUST MY LAPTOP AND GRAND IDEAS.”**

**16 | Ijeoma Balogun, 29, Nigeria**  
**FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR:**  
**REDRICKPR**

At 19, Ijeoma Balogun became the style editor of Nigeria’s largest entertainment and lifestyle blog *Bella Naija* and won Fashion Journalist of the Year at the 2011 Fab Awards.

She has since been destined for greatness.

With the encouragement of her then boss, Uche Pedro, she decided to venture into public relations and founded her own company, RedrickPR in 2012.

“I started the company from home, in my dad’s study, with zero employees, zero funds, just my laptop and grand ideas to change the PR landscape in Nigeria,” she says.

Today, her team has grown to four.

Her company specializes in designing and executing strategic integrated campaigns, to

support enterprises and startups to innovate, accelerate and grow.

They have worked with numerous clients including Viber, the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade & Investment, the Federal Ministry of Communication & Technology, Jumia Nigeria, MAC Cosmetics and Coca-Cola.

One of her biggest achievements was in 2016; Balogun brokered a strategic partnership with Celebrity Services Africa, which offered her company the opportunity to represent local and multinational companies globally.

She also founded Redrick Accelerate Workshops, a platform that has impacted over 150 people, so far, through free workshops and training to improve employability.

**17 | Bright Jaja, 29, Nigeria**  
**FOUNDER AND CEO:**  
**ICREATE AFRICA**



Bright Jaja’s drive has always been to improve the skills of young Africans who could not afford education.

So, in 2016, while studying, he set up a summer school to teach students garment-making, bead-making, art, make-up design, graphic design, 3D animation, web design, cooking and music, at no cost.

As a result, iCreate Africa, a social enterprise, was born with the aim of becoming the face of skills in Africa.

He and his team were invited to attend the 44th edition of the WorldSkills Abu Dhabi 2017 along with members from 77 countries and 53 skill-sets.

From he learned there, he modeled iCreate Africa to promote skills in Africa.

The company grew to hosting one of Africa’s biggest technical and vocational

skills competitions, the iCreate Skill Fest.

It is a two-day skills competition that features 84 competitors from West Africa competing in 14 skill categories such as brick-laying, plumbing, carpentry, tailoring, hair-dressing and more.

Jaja says over 80,000 people have been impacted by the program and they have managed to secure contracts with companies.

“We rebranded the image of technical skills for everyone to be willing to become part of the skill eco-system we created,” he says.

His team consists of 10 full-time staff and over 1,000 volunteers.

This year, Jaja plans to launch iCreate Skill Hub, training centers and an app to connect skill services to clients across Africa.

**18 | Jesse Carlton Happy Ndongo, 28, Cameroon**  
**FOUNDER: EASY GROUP**



From hosting meetings in internet cafes to owning a successful marketing company, Jesse Carlton Happy Ndongo has proven you can start a business from anywhere.

The Cameroonian is the founder and marketing manager of Easy Group, an events agency that operates in Central Africa providing marketing, events, print and audio-visual solutions.

In the last three years, Ndongo and his team have overseen over 1,000 events across Central Africa.

He employs 107 full-time employees and 1,000 part-time. But ‘founder’ is not the only title to his name. He is also a philanthropist, writer and speaker.

In 2013, he started carltonsmilecharity.org, aimed at bridging the gap between the generous and needy.

“After a year, the organization had impacted about 1,000 orphans, with

over 100 volunteers in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Gabon and Cameroon,” he says.

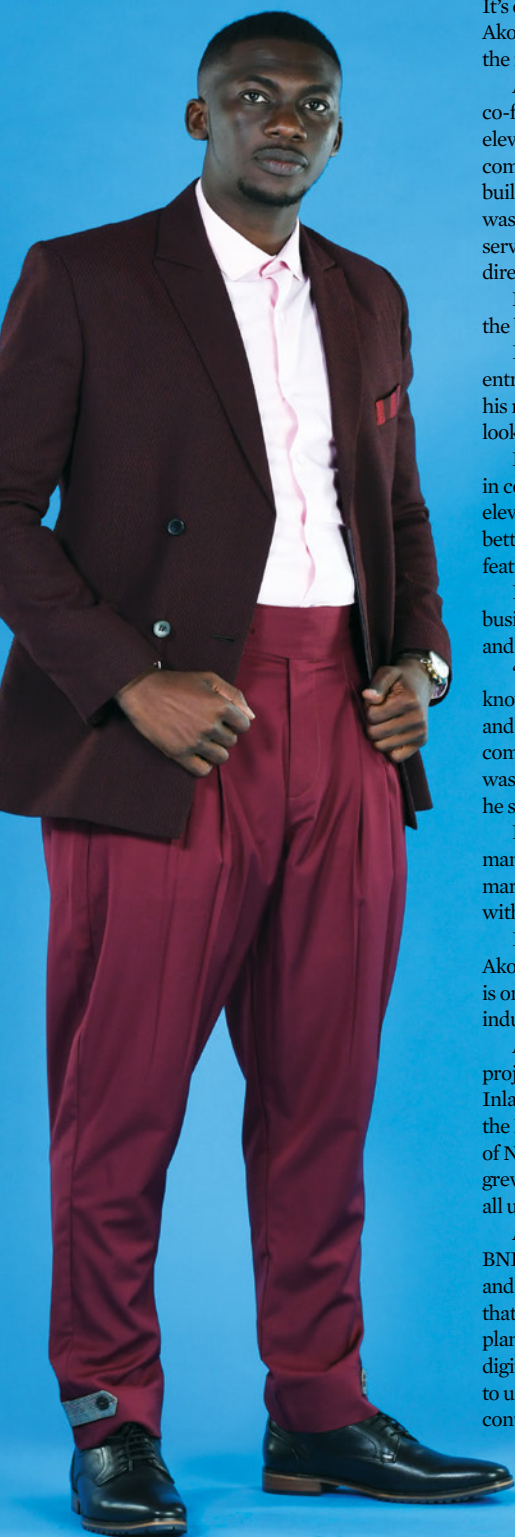
Two years later, he published his first book *The What, Why and How of Charity*.

“The funds raised from the book sales helped assist about 300 widows and orphans with supplies in food and books. Today, we continue to work with 100 orphans to enable them to obtain their A-levels (matric) next year,” he says.

As Cameroon is gearing up to host the Africa Cup of Nations in 2021, Ndongo says he plans to drive innovation, partnerships and investments to ensure that by then, Cameroon provides Africa with a memorable experience.

About his FORBES AFRICA 30 Under 30 profile, he quips: “If this was my autobiography, it would be titled ‘We Have A Continent To Build’.”

## 19 | **Henrich Akomolafe, 26, Nigeria** CO-FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR: AKOTEX NIGERIA LIMITED



It's easy to see why Henrich Akomolafe's business is on the rise.

Alongside his dad, he co-founded one of the leading elevator manufacturing companies for high-rise buildings in Nigeria when he was only eight years old. He served as one of the board of directors.

However, as he grew up, the business began to decline.

Inspired by his dad's entrepreneurial spirit, he left his master's degree in Spain to look after the business.

He changed his career in computer engineering to elevator manufacturing to better understand the business features and functionality.

In 2016, he took over the business as Managing Director and took it up several notches.

"Armed with a better knowledge of the product and a dogged zeal to get the company back on its feet, I was determined to succeed," he says.

He negotiated deals with manufacturers in Spain, marketed the business and met with investors.

In less than three years, Akomolafe succeeded and is one of the youngest in the industry.

Akotex bagged national projects with the Federal Inland Revenue Service and the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria, and others. The staff grew from 20 to 80 employees, all under the age of 40.

Akomolafe then founded BNR Engineering, a real estate and construction company that provides flexible payment plans and options such as digital currency. He plans to uplift the continent as he continues to innovate.

## 20 | **Lesego Mokae, 29, South Africa** CO-FOUNDER: DITSOGO PROJECT

Lesego Mokae is a woman of steel, literally.

She currently runs a 100% black female-owned engineering company that specializes in metal fabrication, plant maintenance and steel products supply.

Mokae started the business with her co-founder, Tebogo Mosito, from her garage in Maile, a small area in Rustenburg, South Africa, known for mining.

"I remember when we were visited by one of the mine representatives, we were told we need to be professional if we wanted to make it in business," she tells FORBES AFRICA.

Those words stuck.

Her business now services six mines: Impala Platinum, Bushveld Vametco, Electro Hydro World, Pilanesberg Platinum Mine, AngloAmerican Platinum and Royal Bafokeng Platinum.



Her business was a national finalist at the Productivity Awards for Most Improved SME in the Emerging Sector category.

Mokae plans to grow the business and have four branches around South Africa in the next three years.

In the next three years, she also plans to enrol 30 learners for internship and learnership programs in the business.

## 21 | **Oginni Tolulope, 29, Nigeria** FOUNDER AND CEO: TRANSFURD LIMITED

Oginni Tolulope founded an agricultural company after being unemployed for many months.

With the belief that agriculture is capable of eradicating poverty and hunger, his company provides agricultural development, management service, farm setting up, farm land leasing and sales, and youth empowerment.

Tolulope currently owns 50 hectares of land in three different states where he plants, processes and packages crops such as rice, maize and cassava.

Last year, his company made the list of the top 100 emerging SMEs in Nigeria by Connect Nigeria and the year before, he received an award for the most promising Agro Business of the Year 2017 by Teras Realtors and Homes Limited.

This year, Tolulope was appointed Vice President of the World Food Program at the Ghana International Model United Nations Conference.

He plans on creating greener



pastures for all.

"My plan is very simple. For my food processing business, I want to have my processing plants across the 36 states of Nigeria which can employ over 1,000 citizens in each state.

"On the empowerment scheme, we plan to have empowered 5,000 farmers cutting across the rural farmers, youths and junior level students by year 2030," he says.

## 22 | Theo Baloyi, 29, South Africa FOUNDER AND CEO: BATHU SWAG

Theo Baloyi took a step in the right direction when he started his business in 2015 from his room in the Alexandra township of South Africa.

With a savings of R250,000 (\$17,363) from his previous job, Baloyi founded a proudly African sneaker brand called Bathu Swag.

"I wanted to start something inspiring and sustainable for my brothers and sisters in the township. Today, we employ 31 people and 17 of those are from Alexandra," he says.

The sneakers have breathable material and come in an assortment of colors such as red, orange and yellow.

Some have the distinct branding marks with streaks of colors on the sole of the shoes.

Baloyi's aim was not to be a fashion brand but rather a shoe retail brand.

Bathu currently has three stores and plans to open seven more by April next year.

"We want to penetrate the SADC region in the next two years and Central Africa in the next five years, and East Africa in 10 years," says the ambitious 29-year-old.


Since its inception, the company has grown 2,136%.

This year, the company won the Young Entrepreneur Award at the 6th Annual South African Premier Business Awards.

Baloyi plans to take this proudly township-founded shoe to the world one step at a time.



"I WANTED TO START SOMETHING INSPIRING AND SUSTAINABLE FOR MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE TOWNSHIP."



## 23 | Avthar Aniruth, 21, South Africa FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: AUDIENCE NETWORKS

Avthar Aniruth is a self-taught director, video creator, editor and entrepreneur from the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa.

Growing up, he spent days watching *YouTube* videos, researching and discovering global trends that hadn't reached South African soil.

He used his family camcorder and started making small videos and his passion grew.

He made money from odd jobs at weddings and functions and would sometimes work for free.

That's when he had the idea to create his own video content with local appeal. He founded Epic Videos, now known as Audience Networks.

The company specializes in the creation of digital and video content for advertising and marketing.

They are currently a team of five and have worked with clients such as Virgin Active, Coca-Cola, Sibaya Casino and Entertainment Kingdom, and Defy.

In 2018, he attended the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) in the United States to learn from experts in the video and broadcasting industry; ticking off one of the dreams from his bucket list.

With some of the insights from NAB, he built a green screen studio from scratch and created an online TV show called *Eat 101* where South African restaurants are reviewed.

At only 21 years old, his company has signed contracts with major broadcast companies such as *SABC 1, 2 and 3, DStv* and *M-Net*.

Aniruth plans to become a major supplier of *Netflix* content, grow throughout Africa and become a multi-billion dollar business.

"[Our plan is] to stay relevant and be seen as a global leader. We were faced with many technical problems, but we do whatever it takes, to learn, troubleshoot and overcome any challenges," he says.

## 24 | Barbara Okereke, 28, Nigeria CAKE DESIGNER, FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR: OVEN SECRET LIMITED

Barbara Okereke's story is nothing short of sweet.

Instead of coming for a slice of life, she is coming for the whole cake.

In 2015, she registered for cake-baking and decorating training at Fair Cake, a premier cake school in London.

By September that year, she returned to Nigeria and her business officially kicked off in the southern part of Nigeria in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Her life-like cakes will have the average eye doing a double take. Okereke says she always had a flair for art and craft such as drawing and sketching.

But she never thought her talent would be the cherry on top for her business.

"Weirdly, I never really thought about cake-designing at first, until the day I came across a clip on *YouTube* by Yolanda Gampp, a Canada-based cake designer. Her works were amazing and so realistic, that I spent the whole day watching her videos and downloading a few on my phone," she says.

Despite being a cake boss, Okereke holds an MBA in Oil and Gas Management which, she says, allowed her to have a versatile and open mind.



She says she plans to offer online training for students who have an interest in cake decorating.

"[I plan to] be the most sought-after cake business by 2023."

Her business grew by 91% in revenue from 2016 to 2018. Imagine the growth in the next few years.

## 25 | Jessica Anuna, 27, Nigeria

FOUNDER AND CEO:  
KLASHA

Jessica Anuna was named by *Management Today* as one of their 35 Women Under 35 to watch, and the US embassy in London named her as one of its global leaders.

She owns an online fashion empire called Klasha. It is a platform for fast fashion retailers serving millennials in Africa.

Featured as one of FORBES WOMAN AFRICA's New Wealth Creators in March, Anuna founded Klasha in 2017 with an investment of \$120,000 from Techstars Dubai, an international startup accelerator, funding and mentorship organization.

After living in China at age 23, she grew up admiring how they did business and decided to do the same in her country.

Anuna currently employs a team of six women, all under the age of 27.

Her platform allows fashion buyers to buy items with the South



African rand, Nigeria naira, Kenyan shillings, Ghanaian cedi and three international currencies, with a delivery time of one to five days.

"I do believe Africa has the power to change and be a force economically..." she says.

Anuna, who can speak fluent French and Mandarin, plans to grow the company global.

## 26 | Charles Edosomwan, 29, Nigeria

FOUNDER AND CHIEF STRATEGIST:  
TEKSIGHT EDGE LIMITED

Charles Edosomwan is a qualified computer scientist, digital marketer and holds an MBA in strategy management, so he decided to merge all these skills to start a business in public relations.

In 2014, he founded, TekSight Edge Ltd, a technology PR firm in Nigeria.

Since then, his company grew from strength to strength.

They now also operate in Ghana, Kenya and Rwanda, with a total of 32 staff.

His biggest year yet was 2017.

That year, Edosomwan and the Kenyan TekSight team won the USAID Kenya Electoral Assistant Program and built a digital platform to support the judicial process for the election.

"This was a massive progress for the team and placed TekSight as a credible brand alongside other



global PR brands," he says.

Last year, he founded another company called Askifa.ng, a news brand aimed at helping people understand technology better.

Through the platform Edosomwan invested approximately N6,000,000 (\$16,584) to promote poetry and technology which gave rise to the birth of a spoken word hangout called Demystifying Technology, a monthly space for students and spoken word artists to compete for a money prize.

Edosomwan says he aims to leave a positive and lasting impression in the African tech space.

## 27 | Charmaine Mbatha, 29, South Africa

CO-FOUNDER:  
MILLENNIAL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS

Resigning from her job was a carefully-calculated risk.

Charmaine Mbatha was making a safe transition from employee to entrepreneur.

She founded Millennial Business Administrators, a company providing services for startups, organizations and personal brands on virtual assistance, editing and writing, content development, and speaking. It is a magazine that promotes, inspires, educates and celebrates global women of color for their achievements in life and business.

"It was clear I had to jump without a parachute, by far the most liberating decision and also the most painful journey. Being an overachiever all my life, I'd not known failure and loss until I became a business owner," she reflects.

The company later traded as The Grit Media to make way for two publications currently known as *Her Grit Magazine* and *His Grit Magazine*.

Both publications reach a global audience in over 52 countries, sharing inspiring stories.

One of her greatest highlights



was working alongside JT Foxx, a wealth and business coach.

She also had the opportunity to attend his event Mega Success in Los Angeles with over 2,500 global entrepreneurs and prominent personalities like Mel Gibson, Steve Wozniak, Jessica Simpson, and Dr Phil.

Mbatha says her goal is to create more small business owners than employees.

"I don't have a single employee, I hire people who are freelancers or have small businesses; endorsing a culture of flexibility, innovation and financial independence."

## 28 | Shaney Vijendranath, 28, South Africa

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO:  
VIMAGE MEDIA

When Shaney Vijendranath became a mother at 20, she found motherhood to be a lonely journey as some of her friends were not parents yet.

As a result, she found it difficult to access information on motherhood and baby care and so she went on to start her own platform that answered all the questions she had.

She co-founded Vimage Media with her husband, which has two brands under it; *You, Baby and I* and *MomSays*.

In 2016, Vijendranath made her first mark in the blogging community when she won the Kids Emporium's mommy bloggers competition for her platform: *You, Baby and I*.

"The *You, Baby and I* blog is about a young mom's journey through motherhood and the little bumps along the way. The aim of the blog is to share real stories, connect moms to amazing brands and get the conversation going," she says.

It was named Africa's Most Influential Parenting Blog in 2016 by WebInfluential and Best Parenting Blog in 2017 at the South African Blog Awards.

The growth in her first blog led



her to starting her second, called *MomSays*, a data analytics platform helping brands engage with new moms using the collective knowledge of over 1,000 experienced mothers in South Africa.

In 2018, Vijendranath was the only entrepreneur chosen from South Africa to represent the country at the Collective Global Accelerator program in London.

She plans to introduce e-commerce and AI on *MomSays*, which could help mothers earn an extra income doing what they love – selling and recommending products and services.

## 29 | Adetola Nola, 28, Nigeria FOUNDER AND CEO: VERITASI PROPERTIES LIMITED

Adetola Nola sold shoes before he found his feet in the real estate business.

He was scouted by a real estate agent from Grenadine Homes, in Nigeria, who thought his shoe-selling skills were impeccable.

Nola then joined the team and went from selling footwear to homes.

"I made my first sale in the

eighth month," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

As a result, he received a lot of exposure, traveled and learned not only to sell houses but also land and real estate projects.

This encouraged him to start his own company, Veritasi Properties Limited, with money he made selling equipment from his shoe business and the two cars he owned.

"I started Veritasi because I realized that most of the real estate companies that I was launching projects for, just wanted to make money instead of offering value. I felt we could do better and create employment opportunities for people," he says.

They provide real estate investment, development and marketing services.

To date, Veritasi has sold properties such as Star City Gardens, Camberwell Estates in Eleko, which is known for its luxury estates. In less than two years, Nola says they made over N2 billion (\$5,56 million).

From a business that started with one staff member, Nola has grown it to 18 full-time staff, 1,300 Veritasi realtors and over 12,000 real estate consultants.



## 1 | Nthabiseng Mosia, 28, Sierra Leone CO-FOUNDER AND CMO: EASY SOLAR

Nthabiseng Mosia grew up on the outskirts of the township of Alexandra in South Africa, and while attending high school, load shedding (scheduled power cuts) and electricity black outs would affect her studies.

"So when the lights went out, we lived by candlelight. The first few nights, it was fun and somewhat romantic," she tells FORBES AFRICA.

But a few months into the electricity crisis, the novelty wore off.

Mosia was frustrated while studying for her final high school exams under a dim light of a wick, not knowing at the time that this frustration would be the catalyst that drove her to start Easy Solar.

If load shedding was affecting her to this extent, then how much more for millions of Africans who do not have daily electricity?

Mosia made it her personal

mission to fix this problem.

While studying Global Energy Policy and Finance at Columbia University in 2015, she started Easy Solar, along with her co-founders Eric Silverman and Alexandre Tourre.

They founded the business in Sierra Leone, where almost 90% of people did not have electricity at the time.

They introduced an entry-level solar product into their business model in an attempt to really target low-income customers.

Today, Easy Solar supplies, installs and services all variety of solar systems.

They also sell solar PV panels, PV mounting structures, solar charge controllers, solar inverters, lead-acid and Li-Ion batteries.

Easy Solar has also expanded to Liberia and Malawi, and plans to expand into Liberia and Guinea in the next few years.



## 30 | Caleb Stephen David, 27, South Africa FOUNDER AND CEO: VERSATILE COMMODITY TRADERS



"From flipping burgers at Steers, to selling insurance policies and everything in between. I never imagined that I would be one of the youngest fuel wholesalers and entrepreneurs in the industry," says a stunned Caleb Stephen David.

While working as a financial advisor, he was approached by a client to sell fuel part-time.

Fascinated by the fuel industry, David then decided to start his own business and Versatile Commodity Traders was established.

When he turned 24, he received his wholesale license to sell fuel, and threw himself in the deep end, quit his job as financial advisor and began learning the ropes.

It took him a year to sell his first liter of fuel but today, David has built a company which sells 7 million liters a month.

They currently trade petroleum products, diesel, jet fuel, paraffin to South Africa and neighboring countries such as Botswana, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

"My vision for Versatile Commodity Traders is to be the largest independent-owned fuel wholesale company in South Africa for local and export distribution," he says.

## 2 | Evans Akanno, 29, Nigeria FOUNDER AND CEO: CREGITAL

With N600,000 (\$1,600), Evans Akanno founded Cregital, a creative and digital platform, in 2015.

The company designs and builds websites and platforms for African startups and corporates.

“Running a startup in Nigeria with a lean budget, especially in our economy, requires a lot of courage,” he says.

This is because some of the challenges they face include the high cost of power and the liability of the internet in Nigeria.

However, Akanno says in starting the company, he had to make sure it was bootstrapped from the beginning especially when building the team as he says they hired “attitude over skill”.

Over the years, he has won numerous awards including the 2018 Nigeria Technology Awards as the Tech Young Achiever of the Year and the 2016 Future Awards Africa Prize



for Creative Professional.

Last year, he founded another tech platform, called Farmkart, which enables people to bank in agriculture by investing in fish farming. In the same year, he also launched Acts of Random Kindness, Cregital's CSR initiative to give back to the community.

## 4 | Nureshka Viranna, 27, South Africa CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR: SHOPLI

Nureshka Viranna grew up in Durban in South Africa and comes from a family of academics.

Despite being encouraged to pursue a similar route, Viranna's passion was in marketing, technology and innovation.

So she quit her teaching job in 2015 to follow her dreams.

She co-founded an e-commerce company called ShopLi and broke every norm, becoming the first entrepreneur in her family.

“It was the best decision and financial investment I made,” she tells FORBES AFRICA.

ShopLi is an e-commerce company that designs and develops online stores and catalogues for businesses that can't afford high rentals or to pay salaries.

“They now had the ability to sell to anyone in the world and operate 24/7,” she says.

She currently employs a team of five.

At the end of last year, she was asked by a friend to assist her son with learning Afrikaans, but she couldn't



find any online resources to help.

This led her to found another business in 2019 called Lit Academy.

She created an online course focusing on video and study guides to help learners improve their marks.

“Lit Academy has given us the opportunity to make quality education available to learners, at a fraction of the cost of tuition. Our aim is to disrupt the education system in South Africa,” she says.

Viranna describes herself as an innovator, disruptor and entrepreneur and aims to become a leading woman in the e-commerce and digital space.

## 3 | Michael Paul Mollel, 29, Tanzania CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN: JIMZ TECHNOLOGIES CO. LTD

Michael Paul Mollel is taking a college startup to the world.

He started providing IT support when he was only 15 years old.

He would sell IT equipment such as dongles and flash drives to students and professors.

In 2015, while attending university, the IT enthusiast sought to solve an existing gap at his institution.

“While pursuing an MBA, I kept noticing that both students and professors had problems with their laptops [and] had no where they could rely to have their laptops attended and fixed,” he says.

That's when Jimz Technologies Co. Ltd was born.

Initially, they only had enough money to pay for the first month's rent, including a chair and table.

A year later, clients started filing in and the contracts for IT support grew.

Now, their reach is global and they also provide IT support services for



international companies such as Tetra Tech and Winrock International.

“It is possible for an African college startup to go miles; even the sky is not the limit anymore. Our team has grown from two to 10; and our sales have almost quadrupled in 2018,” he says.

Next year, Mollel says they plan to open an office in Kigali; part of his plan in taking his college startup everywhere.

## 5 | Jacob Rugano, 29, Kenya CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR: AFRICARTRACK INTERNATIONAL

Jacob Rugano founded a company called AfricarTrack International after developing a mobile-controlled road-accident control system that uses a mobile phone to reduce accidents on the road.

It all started when one of his cousins was involved in an accident.

“The accident was caused by a lorry driver who was driving while drunk and over-speeding. Several members of his family died in the accident,” he says.

This gave Rugano the impetus to start a tech company as a solution to help curb road accidents and in 2014, AfricarTrack International was born.

A programmed chip is installed inside the car which acts as a liaison between the car's computer and the reporting and control system.

The system then collects data on whether the driver had been driving drunk, driving carelessly, as well as the location of the vehicle if hijacked.

“The sensor also automatically controls the car in case it is about to get involved in an accident, reducing the chances of an accident by over



48.67%,” he says.

The company has won numerous awards including the Changemaker Of The Year at the 2016 African Achievers Awards in Sandton, South Africa.

He was also listed among the 2016 Top 40 Under 40 Men in Kenya by *Business Daily*.

Rugano is passionate about increasing the number of African tech leaders and currently mentors a group of 150 every Sunday.

He plans to expand to South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and install the technology in at least two million vehicles in Kenya.

## 6 | Fred Oyetayo, 25, Nigeria FOUNDER AND CEO: FRESIBLE

Seven years ago, Fred Oyetayo created a digital agency from his university dorm room, unaware that one day it would erupt into a multi-million naira business. Oyetayo is a trained lawyer but enjoyed the digital space more.

Fresible, his enterprise, provides services such as website development, software development, digital marketing and events management.

Oyetayo says the company has trained over 60 individuals in entrepreneurship, digital marketing and web/app development.

Some of their present and past clients include Afe Babalola University, the Federal High Court Nigeria, Dangote Group and First Bank of Nigeria.

In August 2018, the company launched Dlaw.ng (formerly law repository), a web application that uses artificial intelligence to provide legal services to small and medium



scale businesses in Nigeria.

Oyetayo plans on his company being one of the largest tech companies in the world.

## 8 | Hansley Noruthun, 27, Mauritius FOUNDER: MAURITIUS SPACE AND SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Hansley Noruthun was born and raised in the village of Triolet in Mauritius, where being a part of the space industry was just a dream.

Now, it has become his reality.

Noruthun is the founder of the Mauritius Space and Science Foundation (MSSF), a community in Mauritius for space, aeronautics and science professionals, students and enthusiasts.

They tackle local and regional issues, using space applications and technologies in areas such as agribusiness, maritime, climate change, earth observation, health and engagement of youth and women in the sector.

It all started when he received a full scholarship by the UK Space Agency and European Centre for Space Applications and Telecommunications to complete the Space Studies Program 2015 hosted by NASA's Glenn Research Center in US.

The following year, he received the Space Generation Leadership Award by the Space Generation Advisory Council in support of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and elected the

National Point of Contact (NPoC) for Mauritius.

This gave him the exposure to further develop MSSF.

He recruited a team of 18 from other African countries, and together, they managed to secure a proposal to host the African Space Generation Workshop series in Mauritius.

"The foundation also managed to connect over 25% of the national general public reaching over 300,000 out of the 1.3 million population," Noruthun says.

Noruthun's future plans are stratospheric.

"We will be starting with our exclusive National Space Tour, that will be running globally. This is a new project part of the agenda for the foundation that will be launched this year," he says.



## 7 | Alpha Nury, 29, Senegal FOUNDER AND CEO: JAMAA FUNDING

Alpha Nury left his career in finance, working with global companies, Chanel, Apple and L'Oréal to start his own business aimed at financing others.

With €10,000 (\$548,617) in savings, Nury launched Jamaa Funding in 2015.

The business is a crowdfunding site aimed at humanitarian and solidarity-based projects using time and money to fund projects all over the world.

To date, they have had numerous successfully-funded projects such as the creation of a farming school, overcoming sickle cell disease, green turtle protection, funding a football team and building a new school.

Nury's platform has had successful campaigns with 24,102 supported people in Africa, 150 supported people in Asia, and 40 in America.

"Joy is the feeling that we felt the first time a project was funded on the platform and it is a feeling that we continue to have with the same intensity every time. Seeing dreams



come true is our reason to exist as a company," Nury tells FORBES AFRICA.

"By 2020, we hope to have impacted 500,000 people via our platform."

Some of his biggest milestones have been collaborating with the World Bank and the African Union. *Tropics Magazine* shortlisted him as one of the Most Influential People in Business in 2018, alongside Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the UN.

## 9 | Schizzo Thomson, 29, Malawi FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR: SKY ENERGY

Power failure in Malawi is a prominent issue.

But the lightbulb came on for a young Malawian electrical engineer from the city of Blantyre.

Schizzo Thomson left the company he was working with in Ireland, returned to Malawi, and registered his business in 2015.

Sky Energy designs, supplies and installs solar energy and power backup systems.

"I have always said that I never started my business with any money but I started with an idea," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

One of his biggest projects was designing and installing a 40KW solar power system at Mulanje Mission Hospital.



Thompson currently employs 32. They have since expanded to Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

## 10 | Wilford Mwanza, 29, Zimbabwe

FOUNDER AND CEO:  
FORDOLUTIONS

Wilford Mwanza once attempted to build a power station to increase the efficiency of the national electricity utility in Zimbabwe.

He initiated and drafted a roadmap for the establishment of a smart grid in Zimbabwe, with assistance from the management at the Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC).

This spark of electricity resulted in the creation of Mwanza's company, FordOolutions. It provides simplified practical training on the applications



**"WE HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF DIRECTING HOW THE NARRATIVE WILL GO IN AFRICA WITH REGARDS TO ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION."**

of robotics using NXT Lego robots for SMEs, private businesses, and government organizations in Zimbabwe.

"To date, we have trained over 1,000 participants, done data analytics which assisted our clients to have better insights in decision making, inspired high schools kids to dream brighter of a future with robotics," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

The 29-year-old electrical engineer has big plans for Africa's Fourth Industrial Revolution.

"We believe we are tapping a very green opportunity and have the privilege of directing how the narrative will go in Africa with regard to robotics and automation," he says.

Last year, he was one of 60 Global Shapers at the World Economic Forum on Africa.

At the 2017 Enactus World Cup in London, he won the Enactus World Wide Global Alumni of the Year, where he was representing Zimbabwe.

## 11 | Vena Arielle Ahouansou, 25, Benin

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO:  
KEA MEDICALS

In 2016, Vena Arielle Ahouansou was part of a delivery team that successfully delivered two babies. But, unfortunately, the delivery caused a haemorrhage in the mother and a blood transfusion was needed immediately.

It took the doctors 10 minutes to find her blood type as the mother was fighting for her life.

Sadly, it was 10 minutes too long. The mother died that night.

It was a sad and unfortunate loss for Ahouansou and her team.

Since then, she vowed to find a solution to improve healthcare in Africa.

That solution was KEA Medicals, established in 2016.

It is a digital platform that connects health structures through a single database, the Universal Medical Identity (IMU), to facilitate the feedback of the medical history of patients.

As a patient, your medical record can be accessed from anywhere and at any time.

Today, they have over 1,700 health professionals linked on the platform.



They currently employ a team of 15, mixed with tech engineers, medical doctors, communications and laws specialists.

"My vision is to ensure an easy and equitable access to healthcare for people around the world by breaking down barriers to access to healthcare for them," Ahouansou tells FORBES AFRICA.

In the next four years, she plans to connect 500 million Africans to one million medical doctors.

Ahouansou is also a Techstars accelerator program alumni, GSMA Ecosystem Accelerator program and Tony Elumelu Foundation Entrepreneurship Programme fellow.

## 12 | Damilola Olokesusi, 29, Nigeria

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO:  
SHUTTLERS LOGISTICS COMPANY



**"[THE] SAME DAY, I PITCHED IN FRONT OF MARK ZUCKERBERG, THE BEST PART WAS HIM MENTIONING SHUTTLERS IN ONE OF HIS FACEBOOK POSTS."**

With 40% of all cars in Nigeria registered in Lagos, commuting can be stressful.

Fortunately, Damilola Olokesusi has come up with an innovative way to move with ease in the city.

Her business, Shuttlers Logistics Company, uses web and mobile app technology to enable users to book trips along fixed routes at 60%-80% less than ride-hailing services.

You can book a seat, make payments and track updates of your transportation in real-time in a car shared with other professionals and with free wi-fi services.

Olokesusi and her co-founder used their savings to start the business after her sister was robbed by armed men disguised as public bus drivers, on her way to work.

"These horrific experiences created a need for me to create a solution that my colleagues, friends, family and I could use,"

she tells FORBES AFRICA.

As the business grew, they received grants from the World Bank, Airtel and Sahara Energy, all of which allowed them to go from one to 22 routes in Lagos.

"One of my biggest highlights within the business [was] meeting with President [Muhammadu] Buhari and Vice-President [Yemi] Osinbajo at a private meeting... where I had the opportunity of explaining what we do at Shuttlers.

"[The] same day, I pitched in front of Mark Zuckerberg, the best part was him mentioning Shuttlers in one of his Facebook posts," she shares.

Among the awards she has won, she was one of the winners of Women In Africa for the Digital and Technology Award 2017. She is also a World Economic Forum Global Shaper.

She powers on.

## 13 | Diana Esther Wangari, 27, Kenya CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER: SAGITARIX



Diana Esther Wangari was a bright-eyed medical student who had dreams of specializing in neurosurgery.

But instead, when she was introduced to the realities of the health care system in Kenya, her dreams changed.

"I was overwhelmed by a sense of waste and lost opportunities. It always seemed to me that we could be doing so much better," she tells FORBES AFRICA.

As a result, she ventured into health communication and entrepreneurship to bridge the gap between the health system and

doctors, policy-makers and patients.

In 2016, she co-founded Sagitarix, a digital platform that facilitates the direct distribution of drugs to those most in need, with a focus on patients with chronic diseases.

The company launched an app called iSikCure which allows patients to place orders for drugs.

The medicine is then delivered on the same day.

They also introduced a subsidiary company, Checkups Medical Centres, a low-cost rapid diagnostics medical clinic which uses technology.

Last year, they were able to distribute medical supplies worth over \$200,000.

They currently have five clinics, four in rural areas and one in an urban area.

Wangari says they plan to open up four more urban clinics by June 2020.

Her organization has won the Get In The Ring Contest 2018 in Hague, Netherlands.

They were also finalists at the SBC AfriTech 2018 in Paris, France.

## 15 | Shaun Benjamin, 29, Zimbabwe CO-FOUNDER: SIMBA SOLUTIONS

At the age of 16, Shaun Benjamin taught himself computer programming and it was not long before he mastered the trade.

Today, he is the co-founder and head software developer of Simba Solutions, formerly known as N-Sho Technologies.

The company provides business ICT solutions such as mobile apps, websites and systems, cloud servers and video production.

Benjamin started the company in 2008 with his brother when they lived in Cape Town.

Soon after, they relocated to their home country when the Zimbabwean market was embracing mobile app technology.

"This proved to be a stepping-stone to bigger and more diverse technology projects," says Benjamin.

Their biggest highlight, to date, was developing a mobile app and web portal for the UNESCO ICT Essentials for Teachers program to equip rural teachers with the essential skills to teach IT.



They have since created opportunities for 15 small enterprises, supported six families and carried out 20 community initiatives.

At the 2018 Agricultural Show, he programmed an advanced virtual reality platform for the Zimbabwe Power Company.

"It is those noble and genuine reactions across members of all ages, from your five-year-olds to your octogenarians, that are priceless, those assurances that your technology is not only impacting an inanimate corporate person, but real people with real lives," he says.

He plans to create a global brand and is looking at setting up an internship program for young people interested in tech.

## 14 | Chinedu Azodoh, 29, Nigeria CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER: METRO AFRICA XPRESS (MAX)



"You need to have been trapped in Lagos traffic to truly understand the strong sentiments it evokes in Lagosians and visitors alike," Chinedu Azodoh tells FORBES AFRICA, leading to the essence of his business.

Metro Africa Xpress (MAX) is a bike-hailing service that allows passenger or packages to move around Lagos conveniently at the tap of a button.

Azodoh and his co-founder, Adetayo Bamiro, came up with the idea of MAX as part of an assignment while studying at MIT Sloan School, in Massachusetts in the US.

They then returned to Lagos and started the business in 2014 with five staff members and three riders in 2014.

"We were both involved in every part of the business, which is to say that we rode the motorcycles, and made deliveries," Adozoh says.

Today, they have 70 employees and over 1,000 bike riders.

To date, the company has won numerous awards and has been featured by CNN, Business Day and Techstars.

In 2017, they were also one of the 20 top African startups selected for the World Bank Group's digital acceleration program.

They were also announced as one of the Business Day's Top 100 Fastest Growing SMEs in Nigeria.

## 16 | Karidas Tshintsholo, 24, and Matthew Piper, 25, South Africa FOUNDERS: KHULA APP



When Karidas Tshintsholo and Matthew Piper moved to Johannesburg to start a business, they slept on the floor for six months, could not afford a bed, or afford to pay rent and electricity.

But they still got up every day, put on suits and tried their best to make it work.

In the end, it was worth it.

The duo now spend their lives as award-winning entrepreneurs, traveling abroad and staying in five-star hotels.

After founding their first business, they made their first million at 23.

However, it was their second business that developed their knack

for entrepreneurship.

The duo are reaping what they sowed through their agri-tech business called Khula.

It is a platform that connects producers to customers who are looking for locally-grown fresh produce.

It also helps them make deliveries; and provides a platform for farmers to get mentorship.

Last year, they won the MTN App Of The Year and were ranked one of the world's top 10 social ventures through The Chivas Venture.

In the next five to 10 years, they plan to scale the business throughout the SADC, Brazil and India.

## 17 | Courtney Bentley 29, South Africa CO-FOUNDER AND CEO: VIZIBILITI INSIGHT

With just R10 (\$0.69) and no formal business experience, Courtney Bentley started his first business, ZA Support, providing Apple product solutions to individuals, SMEs and Mac Pro clients in South Africa.

However, when he tried to apply for credit for the business, he was denied it because he did not have a credit score.

As a result, he sought to find a solution for this problem he shared with millions of South Africans.

“I was so naïve when I first started out. I did not have money to go to university, and I had no financial background so, I really didn’t know anything about the financial system or how it worked,” he says.

His objective was to build a system that could build track-records for individuals and businesses which didn’t require them to incur debt, and his fintech company Vizibiliti Insight sprung from this challenge. In 2016, Bentley co-founded the business as an alternative credit scoring business, using artificial intelligence for the financial services industry, without an individual having to incur debt to

prove that they are not a credit risk.

They assess data from individuals, the credit bureau, transactional data, financial analytics and macroeconomic data sets.

The business has analyzed more than R12 billion (\$807 million) in loans contracts and has alternative credit intelligence on over 21 million South African consumers and businesses.

“Our goal, in the next 18 months, is to be the number one most accurate alternative credit scoring platform in South Africa,” he says.

In 2017, the company won the Mercedes-Benz Predictive Manufacturing Award and last year, they were nominated for the CNBC Africa All Africa Business Leaders Awards Innovator of the Year Award.



## 18 | Josh Okpata, 27 and Tochukwu Mbanugo, 29, Nigeria FOUNDERS: EAZYHIRE



In 2016, Josh Okpata and Tochukwu Mbanugo thought it would be the end of their business.

While they were in their incubator phase, someone had stolen their business idea and replicated it online.

Their business Eazyhire, a digital peer-to-peer sharing platform that enables individuals and businesses rent items, was gaining a bad reputation.

“He created an unregistered company called Easyhire. Our tagline was ‘Hire, Lease, Rent,’ while his was ‘Rent, Lease, Hire’. Our domain was Eazy hire with a ‘Z’, his was ‘Easyhire’ with an ‘S’. Even the color coding was replicated,” recalls Mbanugo.

They received an overwhelming amount of backlash from the media and prospective clients.

But that did not deter them.

It took a massive PR campaign and hard work to win back the hearts of Nigerians.

Eventually, they succeeded and were awarded Nigerian Technology Start-up of 2016 by the Nigerian Internet Registration Association. Together, they have grown the business from less than \$2,000 in 2015 to an estimated \$4 million today.

“We have processed over 60,000 transactions and are projected to get to 100,000 by the end of 2019,” Mbanugo says. They currently have 24 full-time employees in two African countries and 22 contract staff in three countries, including Spain.

Some of their biggest clients include Dangote Group, Siemens, Google and Intel.

## 19 | Muhammad Salisu Abdullahi, 28, Nigeria CO-FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR: ETRASH2CASH

Muhammad Salisu Abdullahi is a young Nigerian turning waste into wealth.

He co-founded eTrash2Cash in 2016, a social enterprise business, in northern Nigeria, using technology to exchange e-waste for money.

Using the website, mobile app and SMS platform, low-income communities can earn money in exchange for their everyday waste.

The waste is then sorted, processed and recycled into products such as organic compost from food wastes, raw material pellets from plastic wastes, and tissue paper from paper waste.

Since inception, they have created 27 social micro-entrepreneurs, collected 106,222kg of waste, recycled 99,348kg of waste and paid N5,575,273 (\$15,487) in incentives.

They have since partnered with Microsoft, Co-Creation Hub Nigeria and more.

eTrash2Cash is currently self-



sustainable and 50% of the profits are re-invested back into the business.

“[Our goal is] to make eTrash2Cash an enviro-fintech African brand, which helps people at the bottom of the pyramid to monetize all trash they generate and redeem instant cash to improve their lives,” Abdullahi says.

He plans to reach 100,000 low-income earners by 2025.

Abdullahi is a Mandela Washington Fellow and an alumnus of the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Program.

## 20 | Silas Adekunle, 26, Nigeria CEO AND CO-FOUNDER: REACH ROBOTICS

Silas Adekunle was only a young boy from Nigeria when he dreamed of contributing to the world of modern robotics.

In 2010, he took his first step towards his dream. He went on to study robotics at the University of the West of England.

"I had visions of *Transformers* in real life, [but] the reality was quite different. I couldn't find robots that were functioning [the way] I, and indeed most kids, imagined they should. So, I set out to make one," he

tells FORBES AFRICA.

Five years ago, he made his first prototype.

It was the MekaMon, the world's first augmentative reality gaming robot.

Together with his co-founders Chris Beck and John Rees, they spent years building the business and developing the MekaMon technology.

In 2017, they launched the world's first AR gaming robot and secured \$75 million in investments.

The same year, they launched with Apple in the UK and the US.

This year, they plan to expose MekaMon to advanced students and allow the technology to be used for study and research at university and postgraduate level. Adekunle plans to enable young Africans to achieve their STEM objectives.

He has begun executing a robotics and engineering pilot program in Nigeria and plans to expand it to other African countries.

"All of us at Reach believe that leading from entertainment is the key to creating the next generation of STEM pioneers," he says.



## 21 | Joshua Chibueze, 26, Somto Ifezue, 28, and Odunayo Eweniyi, 26, Nigeria FOUNDERS: PIGGYVEST

Joshua Chibueze, Somto Ifezue and Odunayo Eweniyi can happily say they have helped Nigerians save \$15 million.

The former university mates, at Covenant University in Nigeria, previously co-founded pushcv.com in 2014, a digital job site in Africa with a database of pre-screened candidates.

But that was not all.

Two years later, they founded PiggyVest (formerly piggybank.ng), unaware that it would one day become a million-dollar company.

PiggyVest is a financial technology platform for online

savings and investing, helping the youth improve their saving culture.

"PiggyVest was born out of the need to help people create a sustainable means of saving," Eweniyi tells FORBES AFRICA.

The business has won a number of awards, including the Future Awards Africa Prize In Technology 2018, the *Business Day* Top 100 SMEs, and the 2017 Village Capital Fintech.

Eweniyi has been recognized as the SME Entrepreneur of the Year at Wealth and Society West Africa for 2019.



## 22 | Uka Eje, 29, Nigeria CO-FOUNDER AND CEO: THRIVE AGRIC

Uka Eje used to sell KFC and catfish pepper soup in schools. He even went on to run a food e-commerce site. But these initiatives failed.

However, all those challenges culminated in him becoming the business leader he is today, as the CEO of Thrive Agric, selected as one of the most promising companies of the year at the Africa CEO Forum last year.

Thrive Agric is an agricultural technology-enabled company that works with smallholder farmers in Nigeria to give them access to finance.

They have been able to fund over

15,000 farmers across Nigeria.

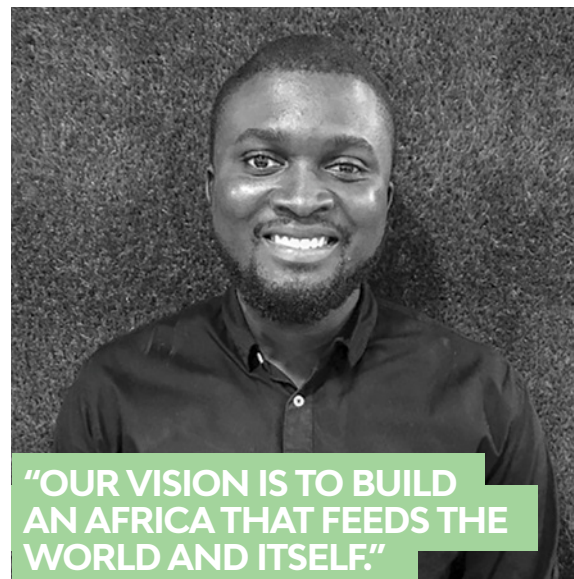
They have a permanent staff of 96 and 14 ad-hoc staff.

One of their biggest achievements to date was being selected to participate in the Google Developers Launchpad Space.

As for Eje, he was part of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) 2018.

He is also a Mandela Washington Fellow.

"Our vision is to build an Africa that feeds the world and itself, and to get this done, we plan to have boarded close to five million farmers in the next seven years," he says.



**"OUR VISION IS TO BUILD AN AFRICA THAT FEEDS THE WORLD AND ITSELF."**

# 23

**Melissa Mwale, 29,  
Zimbabwe**  
FOUNDER: HIVE INCORPORATION,  
AND CO-FOUNDER: CRYPTOGEN



Melissa Mwale is the founder of three organizations, two of them operating in the technology space.

In 2016, Mwale was looking for a professional job while selling second-hand clothes out of the boot of her car.

Tragedy struck.

“The death of my eldest brother when he was only 33 years old gave me a rude awakening. I began to search for my purpose. After deep introspection, I realized I was strongly passionate about Africa,” she tells FORBES AFRICA.

The entrepreneur at heart wanted to find something that would not only change her family, but change the lives of Africans, especially women.

As a result, she started Hive Incorporation, an online fashion store.

She sold her car and laptop and used the money to start the business. The sacrifices paid off because as a result of business success, she was able to buy two brand new ones.

The platform has a secure online shopping service with multiple payment methods to choose from such as Debit Visa Cards, Zimswitch, electronic funds transfer, PayPal, EcoCash, Wallet One, Zipit, Bitcoin and cash on delivery.

Her love for digital and e-commerce led her to co-found CryptoGem Global.

It is a peer-to-peer bitcoin exchange that allows cryptocurrency traders to trade for e-monies or local monies.

She was invited by Afrobytes, an African tech marketplace, to share her journey in the e-commerce and blockchain industry in Paris the same year.

“Sharing the African story with international investors made my dream more tangible. I believe in creating solutions for Africa that work for Africa instead of duplicating the West,” she says.

“In the midst of the difficulties currently being faced by my country, Zimbabwe, I still dare to hope, I still believe in solutions that will help everyone at large,” Mwale adds.

One of her goals is to mentor other women in business and create opportunities that might create 100 female millionaire entrepreneurs in Africa by 2030, through an organization she founded called Messe Foundation.

### JOURNEY MANAGEMENT IS KEY TO BUSINESS TRAVEL SAFETY AND SUCCESS



Jared Higgins, CEO of Secure Drive

While Africa promises some of the best regional economic growth rates in the medium term, a recent spike in security threats is compelling companies to improve security for their employees.

Jared Higgins, CEO of Secure Drive, highlights the role that journey management has in not only protecting people, but ensuring business stability and continuity in an affordable way.

Africa is the second fastest growing economic zone in the world, behind South Asia, with an expected GDP growth of 4% in 2019 and 4.1% in 2020. This growth is set to be led by East Africa, North Africa and West Africa, driven by improved tourism, manufacturing, infrastructure and commodities.

The need for multinationals to travel into Africa for business has never been greater, but with this has come the increase in personal risk to employees.

“Whether you run a fast-growing corporation or lead a goodwill organisation doing outreach work, your people are your most valuable asset in an ever-changing environment of constant technological and political change,” says Higgins.

Organisations that demonstrate the highest commitment to keeping employees protected during their travels are most likely to attract and keep the best talent and ensure the most sustainable business growth.

As part of an increasingly mandated Duty of Care obligation, companies are investing in journey management, especially in higher-risk locations.

Secure Drive’s tailor-made secure passenger transportation service covers more than 40 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. It employs security driving staff who undergo comprehensive security checks and training in multiple skillsets, which can include advanced and defensive driving, hijack prevention, counter surveillance and first aid.

“While journey management might cost a bit more than a taxi or an app-based ride, it offers your business far more value and your staff an increased peace of mind so they can focus on their work instead of stressing about how to navigate an unfamiliar and potentially risky environment,” says Higgins.

#### What does journey management involve?

Journey management effectively manages the pre-trip, on-trip and post-trip stages through risk mitigation.

A detailed pre-trip plan should either remove, redesign or limit exposure to hazards, and travellers need to be provided with thorough knowledge and comply with safety tools.

During the trip, continuous tracking, driving patterns or behaviour, driver fatigue monitoring and a detailed communication policy are adopted. Customers are also supported by Secure Drive’s Global Security Operations Centre (GSOC) that provides real-time, on ground intelligence and information about traffic events that could affect your journey.

After the trip, a project debrief is conducted with identified learnings, along with vehicle maintenance and traveller feedback compiled in a comprehensive report.



## SECUREDRIVE

DRIVEN BY EXCELLENCE

## 24 | Eric Muli, 27, Kenya FOUNDER AND CEO: ODYSSEY CAPITAL

At only 27, Eric Muli's company has been listed by the London Stock Exchange Group as one of the companies to inspire Africa.

But his company isn't the only inspiring thing.

After finishing high school, Muli received a scholarship to attend Babson College in Wellesley in the US and this was where his journey as an entrepreneur began.

He started his first venture, a marketing company called Jossle, while studying.

At the time, Odyssey were recognized by *Business Insider* as one of the best college startups, along with Uber and Microsoft.

Muli ran the company successfully but something was amiss.

"On graduating in 2014, I had a

burning desire to return home and begin building a company that would impact the communities I was raised in," he tells *FORBES AFRICA*.

The following year, he launched Odyssey Capital, a non-deposit-taking financial institution which provides financial products and services to individuals and businesses in the lower to middle income bracket in Kenya.

With a strict policy of 50/50 male-to-female hiring policy, they have since built a team of over 90 employees, 500 sales agents and built partnerships with Samsung, Huawei, TECNO Mobile, Walmart and Airtel.

This year, Muli is expanding into Uganda and Tanzania.

"We are building an African entity and not just a local entity," he says.



## 25 | Eric Rutayisire, 28, Rwanda FOUNDER AND CEO: CHARIS UAS

Eric Rutayisire was born in Kinshasa, Congo, to Rwandan parents who had fled the country due to the political instability and persecution against the Tutsis at the time.

In 2010, he had the opportunity to study at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in the US.

That's where he fell in love with what would form the business he runs today.

With the \$1,000 he invested from his savings, he bought drone parts and built one.

"The building was successful and as I started flying, I saw a great opportunity for business not in the US but in my home country of Rwanda," he says.

Rutayisire set out to do so and his business, Charis UAS, was born in 2014.

The company provides rapid and high-quality aerial imagery to various industries to support intelligent decision-making.

But it wasn't easy.

"Many were sceptical about a young African building such technology and many told me it was



going to fail. Many times, we were chased out of offices because people thought that we were just kids playing around," he says.

To prove the value of the technology, Rutayisire worked an entire year free in 2015 and the demand started pouring in.

Now, he employs 16 full-time staff and has opened new offices in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

One of the projects the company worked on was to use drones to fight malaria.

Last year, the company was voted one of the Companies to Inspire Africa by the London Stock Exchange Group.

Rutayisire plans to expand the business into 15 countries and reach 15 million farmers through his company's services.

## 26 | Wissal Farsal, 27, and Khalid Machchate, 26, Morocco FOUNDERS: K&W TECHNOLOGIES



Wissal Farsal and Khalid Machchate are a duo passionate about technology.

Three years ago, the two founded K&W Technologies International.

It's a digital solutions firm specializing in software and hardware innovative products in a secure and data-driven process.

They design brands, develop solutions and scale strategies, from machine-learning to analytics, digital marketing and protective cybersecurity solutions.

"We created our first product, Skill Learn, that earned us 5,000 active users in its first four months," they tell *FORBES AFRICA*.

In 2017, they were awarded by DEMO Africa as Entrepreneur of the Year and Africa Lion for designing their second product called SOS Santé which is a software and hardware solution used to detect road accidents, and alert the closest emergency service.

Today, they have raised seed funding of \$25,000 to industrialize SOS Santé and deliver their first batch in Morocco to CACF Insurance and Siemens.

They were also accepted into the Silicon Valley's acceleration program.

Their goal is to create innovative solutions with social impact for Africa.

## 27 | Tyrone Adams, 28, and Siyabonga Thomas Tiwana, 29, South Africa

FOUNDERS: SKYWALK INNOVATIONS



Having met in their third year at the University of Cape Town, this duo founded a business out of their shared passion for technology and entrepreneurship.

While Tyrone Adams was working on a project digitizing bookings for a personal trainer, he brought Siyabonga Thomas Tiwana on board to assist, and together they made magic.

They launched the product and it was a success.

Skywalk Innovations is a tech hub and software engineering firm focused on digital transformation to solve business problems, unlock new potential revenue models or drive down inefficiencies in business processes.

They assist businesses to develop

mobile applications, in innovative research, and digital transformation and software integrations.

“We wanted to become Africa’s technology partner,” says Adams.

And so, they set out to do just that. Their clients were local and international, ranging from different industries such as government, agriculture, finance and education.

Their current team of nine is made up of engineers, business analysts and user interface/user experience experts, a majority of whom are also University of Cape Town alumni.

“Our goal is to be the biggest software engineering company in Africa. We are aiming towards a turnover of over R100 million (\$6.7 million) in five years and to be listed in a stock exchange,” says Tiwana.

## 29 | Dorcas Owinoh, 28, Kenya

CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR:  
LAKEHUB



Dorcas Owinoh was born in Kibera, one of the informal settlements in Kenya.

Now, she works at improving technology access to girls from similar backgrounds.

She co-founded LakeHub with her team at university. It is a technology and social innovation hub in Kisumu that supports a community of creatives, programmers, hackers, designers and entrepreneurs; a majority of whom are girls aged

between 13 and 19 years old.

One of their biggest successes was in 2017 when a group of girls from LakeHub were the only team picked to represent Africa at the 2017 Technovation Challenge, sponsored by Google, Verizon and the United Nations in Silicon Valley, US.

“I feel strongly that as women, we have to own our careers and destinies, because no one else is going to be as invested in your success as you will be. Also, it is imperative that women find both mentors and sponsors who can help them guide and navigate the landmines along the way,” Owinoh says.

Some of her company’s partners are Siemens Stiftung, Pluralsight, Hivos, and Segal Family Foundation.

Last year, she was a runner-up at the Queens Young Leaders awards.

## 28 | Chika Madubuko, 27, Nigeria

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO:  
GREYMATE CARE



When Chika Madubuko’s grandmother was bedridden due to diabetes, her family found it difficult to care for her.

“We were all busy and couldn’t provide her with the care she deserved. Hiring a caregiver for her was so complicated. Sometimes, miles were traveled in futility to interview one caregiver, and we often ended up with a poorly-trained caregiver,” she recalls.

As a result, she decided to create a business as a solution to this problem.

GreyMate Care is a digital platform that connects patients to an insured and professional caregiver 24/7.

Madubuko launched the business with \$4,500 in Abuja in 2016.

Her team has since grown to a

staff of 20.

She plans to expand into other African countries such as Kenya and South Africa.

Among her accolades, Madubuko was a finalist for the She Leads Africa Accelerator 2017.

She also received an award for Social Innovation by Women in Africa Philanthropy Entrepreneurs Club Programme.

## 30 | Ndabenhle Ngulube, 28, Matthew Smith, 26, and Marnus van Heerden, 29, South Africa

FOUNDERS: PINEAPPLE APP



With a snap on your mobile phone, you can now insure anything under a minute thanks to this trio.

Marnus van Heerden, Matthew Smith and Ndabenhle Ngulube founded the Pineapple app in 2017.

It is a peer-to-peer, decentralized digital form of fast insurance for absolutely anything except vehicles and houses.

Hannover-Re, one of the largest reinsurance groups in the world, ran a global competition to select a team that would come up with an idea to disrupt the insurance space.

Van Heerden, Smith and Ngulube were the lucky ones to represent Johannesburg and were incubated for six months with salaries and the Pineapple app was born.

“Laden with paper intensive on-boarding procedures, and

hidden behind a veil of complexity, the insurance industry has become somewhat of a landmark for innovation,” they tell FORBES AFRICA.

The next year, they secured R5.2 million (\$359,412) in seed investment from Lireas Holdings.

Since then, they have built a community of 13,000 users.

In 2018, at the Lireas conference, they received a certificate of excellence as the Most Innovative Company and won the MTN business award for the Best Consumer Solution.

This year, they plan to expand their services to insure vehicles at the snap of a picture and they plan to expand to the US as well.

Their plan is to become the go-to insurance product for the “sharing economy”.

## 1 Karabo Poppy Moletsane, 27, South Africa CREATIVE ILLUSTRATOR, STREET ARTIST AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Not only is Karabo Poppy Moletsane an artist aiming for the skies, but you can see some of her work from there too.

In the Zoo Lake public park in Johannesburg, two basketball courts are adorned with her creativity.

From a bird's eye-view, you can see one in blue with a crocodile on it and another in turquoise with a cheetah on it.

Together with another local artist, they designed the courts in collaboration with Nike.

Moletsane is also responsible for tagging the famous landmark in Soweto, the Soweto Towers, which can be seen miles away and has become a source of *kasi* (township) pride.

Moletsane's goal has been to put black female illustrators on the map.

In 2015, she turned her passion for art into a business and founded Mother Tongue-Creative House which is now trading

under her own name, Karabo Poppy.

"This was a five-year journey that started with me only having one month of work experience, living with family and friends, and chartering my own course without scripts for success," she tells FORBES AFRICA.

She has won three Loerie Awards over the course of her career, and her work has been recognized as part of a Grammy-nominated music video *Makeba*, by French singer and artist, Jain.

Poppy was also the first black female artist to paint the Art Wall in the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in California.

For international woman's day in March 2018, she was also the artist behind the sequential Google doodle.

Her contribution to the world has been contemporary African aesthetics and she continues to do so.



## 2 Rophnan Nuri, 29, Ethiopia ELECTRONIC DANCE MUSIC ARTIST



At the age of 10, Rophnan Nuri released his first mixtape, singing and playing the drums with his classmates, and he has not stopped moving to his own beat since.

He self-funded his career with the money he made as a club DJ and over the years, he learned the technical side of music and produced his own distinct sound.

"I was always fascinated by the fusion of different instruments and voices, and created a unique niche for myself by amalgamating traditional Ethiopian sounds from the past with futurist electronic music," he says.

Nuri's talent also saw him being one of the three African DJs chosen by South African DJ, Black Coffee, to perform in Ibiza Spain in 2017.

In 2018, he received awards in three categories at the 2018 Leza Awards in Ethiopia.

In the same year, he featured on a song titled *Get To Work* by Major Lazer, a popular American electronic dance music trio.

Despite his global impact, Nuri says he will always stay true to his Ethiopian roots, one of the reasons why he is most loved by his fellow Ethiopians.

"Getting recognition and support in my home country is unparalleled. My ability to engineer traditional instruments and merge them with popular sounds has earned me incredible support in the form of sold-out performances," he says,

He continues to share his love for music through the Ethiopian DJ Association, nurturing up-and-coming talent.

### 3 Henry Amponsah, 27, Ghana DESIGNER, FOUNDER AND CEO: 101 CLOTHING

Henry Amponsah knew he was going to be a designer from a young age.

"I remember when I told my mum I wanted to be a designer in the future, she angrily said, 'what will be the use of gaining education only to be sitting in a container sewing clothes for chicken change?' That got me laughing out loud and I said to myself 'I will prove this lady wrong in the future,'" he tells FORBES AFRICA.

And Amponsah did just that.

While in high school, he and four friends had a photoshoot with outfits that cost \$150 and they posted the photos on social media.

"The collection went viral and clients started talking to me," Amponsah says.

The recognition pushed him to officially start his business, 101 Clothing, in 2014, and the rest was a stitch in time.

Today, Amponsah has dressed



Samira Bawumia, the wife of Ghana's Vice President. He also runs a foundation that helps with basic school equipment and workshops.

To date, he has received over 10 local and international awards and featured in many magazines including *British Vogue* magazine.

In the end, Amponsah managed to fulfil his dream and that of his mom's; he built his fashion house and is now gunning for a PhD.

### 4 Austin Malema, 28, South Africa PHOTOGRAPHER AND CEO: PIXEL KOLLECTIVE

While some opt to invest in shares or property, Austin Malema opted to invest in memories and everything clicked into place.

Instead of celebrating his 21st birthday with a party, he used the money to buy his first camera, which cost R18,000 (\$1,200).

He began shooting at events, which led to more bookings and he realized that the lens gave him greater access to musicians, actors and prominent people.

Since then, Malema has photographed for many brands globally and for events such as the South African Music Awards, the South African Film and Television Awards and the Global Citizen Festival.

His work has also led to him photographing popular musicians such as Drake, Joey Bada\$\$, AKA, Casper Nyovest, Beyoncé and Jay-Z.

In 2018, when FORBES AFRICA 2018 30 Under 30 alumni, Thuso Mbedu, was nominated for an International Emmy, he was her official photographer in New York.

Apart from his exposure, Malema has turned his passion for



photography into a business.

Last year, he founded his first company, Pixel Kollektive, with his two partners, Kelly Leuw and Sivuyile Matsiliza.

"My biggest dream is for the company to represent young black photographers around South Africa," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

### 5 Harmony Katulondi, 29, Democratic Republic of the Congo PRESENTER, MODEL, ACTOR AND VOICE OVER ARTIST

Harmony Katulondi is a jack of all trades, and definitely a name to remember.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo-born presenter first fell in love with acting and presenting when he moved to South Africa as a toddler.

"I remember going over lines with my parents and stepping into new worlds every time I got on to the stage. I loved the smiles, joy and awe it brought into people's eyes when they saw me," he says.

However, when he was in university, it was nothing close to that feeling.

One day, while studying, a friend told him of a casting gig where they needed tall people.

He applied and it turned out to be African Fashion International.

"I got there, walked, and they loved it, but I needed an agent. They told me to go upstairs and I signed with my current agency and so the casting life began. Commercial here, fashion week and catalogues there. That led to TV shows, stints on *Generations: The Legacy*, and *Skeem Saam*," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

However, there was one goal he aimed to achieve; being a *Top Billing* presenter. Katulondi auditioned for the *Top Billing* presenter search three times and didn't make it.

Disappointed, this prompted him to start his own company in 2016, Harmony Katulondi Pty Ltd, a creative consultancy company.

Two years later, the presenter search came around



again but Katulondi was not eager until his friends pushed him to.

In the end, Katulondi got the part. His talent saw him doing voice-overs for the *Black Panther* movie campaign. He is also the founder of a non-profit called Just Love to help those in need by doing outreaches such as feeding schemes, fundraising, skills development and environmental clean-ups.

## 6 Kapasa Musonda, 29, Zambia FASHION DESIGNER

In 2011, Kapasa Musonda returned to a non-existent fashion industry in her home country, Zambia, after living in the US for six years.

She had just obtained her Associate of Arts Advanced Study degree with a Magna Cum Laude, but had nowhere to use it.

"I had no choice but to open my own design business if I was to survive and make a living at what I knew best," she says.

This birthed her business and fashion house, Mangishi Doll, that same year.

It is a Zambian 'Afro-Eclectic' clothing brand inspired by bold prints and an artistic expression of design and style.

Along the way, Musonda has made enough money to hire two permanent tailors and train five women in advanced fashion design.

In 2017, her garments were retailing at a boutique in Los Angeles and that caught the eyes of many US celebrities.

Among them was iconic actor



Angela Bassett, who wore her garments to the American Black Film Festival Honours in Hollywood.

"We were elated and honored and after Angela Bassett wore our piece, we had the biggest growth spurt we had ever experienced," she says.

It was not long before the BET Awards 2018 invited her for an exclusive fashion event where she presented a 24-piece collection.

From a three-year-old armed with a sewing machine, to taking on the world with couture and elegance, Musonda continues to put African print on the map.

## 7 Richard Akuson, 26, Nigeria FOUNDER AND EDITOR: A NASTY BOY

Richard Akuson's activism for LGBTQ+ and challenging gender norms resulted in him being named one of the 40 most powerful people in Nigeria under the age of 40 in the 2017 YNaijaPower List.

He founded *A Nasty Boy*, a magazine that is a fashion platform celebrating alternative and creative ideas, forms of expression and lifestyles, particularly in the LGBTQ+ community.

It was named one of *Vogue's* 'What to Read This Fall' in 2017.

"That's pretty radical, given the political climate and culture there," *Vogue* said. Akuson is a lawyer by profession, but dove into this creative activism after experiencing a brutal homophobic attack.

He sought asylum in the US and grew his platform into a global brand.

*A Nasty Boy* has since created a safe space to have meaningful conversations for people persecuted for being part of the



LGBTQ+ community.

But Akuson plans to take it a step further. "Through collaborations with American institutions, I'd like to focus my time as a licensed American lawyer on pro-LGBTQ+ rights policy advocacy in Africa," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

He is currently writing a memoir about his journey to the US and co-producing as well as co-directing a documentary series about the lived experiences of African asylum-seekers in the US.

## 8 Menzi Mcunu, 22, South Africa FOUNDER: AFROCENTRIC GENTLEMVN



Menzi Mcunu is one of South Africa's best-dressed young men, and he gets paid for it.

His notable look is a well-tailored suit, tie, top hat and a swag oozing elegance and grace.

Not bad for a 22-year-old.

He has graced the covers of, not one, but two magazines and his biggest highlight was being part of *GQ South Africa's* Best Dressed Men for 2017.

Internationally, he has attended Milan Fashion Week in 2018 and has been featured on *Vogue Italia*, *GQ Russia* and *GQ Australia*.

It all started when he visited Mumbai, India, in 2013.

He was inspired by the Indian culture and its attention to detail in fashion.

As a result, he founded Afrocentric Gentlemvn, an African lifestyle brand that merges European aesthetics and African elegance with suit measurement and creative consultancy services.

"I knew nothing about the technical side or production side of selling garments but I wanted to depict suits differently. I didn't want them to just be suits like the ones I saw at many retailers but I wanted them to represent a lifestyle," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

Mcunu plans to grow his platform, Afrocentric Gentlemvn, globally.

He has also been interested in the development of African luxury and African fashion on the continent.

## 9 | Trevor Stuurman, 26, South Africa PHOTOGRAPHER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR

CNN describes Trevor Stuurman as a cultural force, and indeed he has illustrated that.

Living up to these titles, he has had the opportunity to document former US President, Barack Obama, The Carters (Beyoncé and Jay Z) as well his mentor and someone he considers a sister, Naomi Campbell.

He was born and raised in the diamond city of Kimberley in South Africa's Northern Cape.

After studying film, he was drawn to a different medium of visual arts – photography.

As a result, he became a self-taught photographer; in fact, one of South Africa's most sought-after photographers.

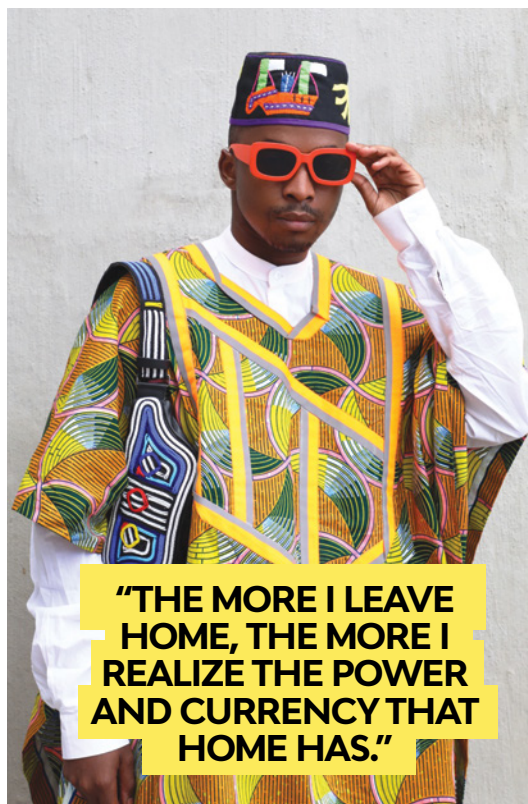
“The more I leave home, the more I realize the power and currency that home has. And I think that it makes me a better story-teller because I am

able to find pieces of home wherever I go and then create tangible products,” he says.

This essence of belonging inspired him to host his first solo exhibition titled *Home*, a love letter to the Himba women of Namibia, at the HAZARD Gallery in Johannesburg.

He has received recognition such as being on *GQ South Africa's* Most Connected and Most Influential Man list 2018, *Mail and Guardian's* Top 200 Young South Africans 2015, and *Destiny Magazine's* Power of 40 List. Stuurman is also a contributor to *British Vogue*.

He plans to have his work live in museums and art galleries around the world and ultimately, to cultivate a space for more young story-tellers on the continent to share their lived African experiences through their own lenses.



## 10 | Burna Boy, 28, Nigeria MUSICIAN

Early this year, Burna Boy took his Nigerian music fire to the US and ended up selling out the iconic Apollo Theatre in New York City where previous African legends like Fela Kuti, Miriam Makeba and Black Coffee were once hosted.

He was also one of the major artists to perform this year at Coachella, one of the world's biggest music and arts festival.

Born Damini Ogulu, he is undoubtedly one of the hottest African recording artists right now and a name to remember.

The Afro-fusion singer and songwriter rose to fame after his lead single *Like to Party* was released in 2012.

Since then, he has moved to his own beat, releasing hit after hit each year.

Some of the world's favorites include *Dangote*, *Ye*, *On the Low*, *Soke*, and *Hallelujah*, each reaching over three million views on *YouTube*.



Of the many accolades, he has won Best Album of the Year, Best Pop Artist of the Year at the Nigerian Entertainment Awards in 2015, and recently received four awards at the Soundcity MVP Awards Festival.

His third studio album *Outside* was hailed by Pulse Nigeria and Nigerian Entertainment Today as the best Nigerian album of 2018.

## 11 | Kim Jayde, 28, Zimbabwe TV PRESENTER, MODEL AND MC

It's not every day that one gets to meet the world's biggest names such as Charlize Theron, Naomi Campbell, Major Lazer, Ciara, Paris Hilton, Tyler Perry and Trevor Noah.

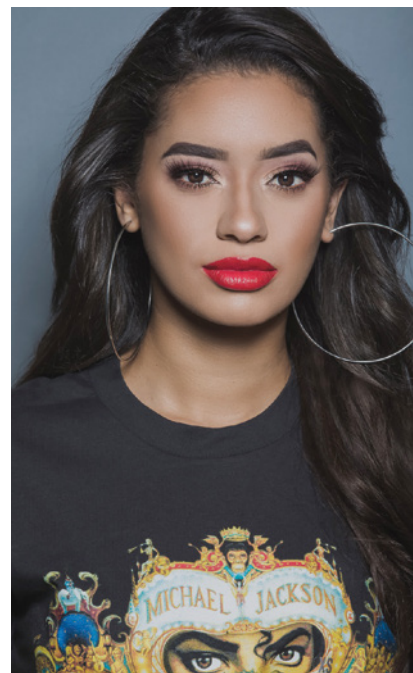
But Harare-born Kim Jayde has. Since she moved to South Africa, she has been landing major gigs, making her undoubtedly one of Zimbabwe's 'it girls' at the moment.

You may have seen her on your screens on *MTV Base Africa* as a presenter, but she has also worked with brands like Revlon, Coca-Cola, Ackermans, Accessorize (London) and more.

“My story of being discovered by *MTV Africa* on Instagram and then going on to become the face of the channel is proof that anything is possible, with hard work, dedication and passion,” she says.

Among the many awards was the Media Personality of the Year at the 2018 Zimbabwe Achievers Awards.

She was also listed as one of the 40 Under 30 class of Emerging Zimbabwe Leaders by Gumiguru and not to mention took home her first international award for Woman in Media at the fifth annual Zimbabwe



International Women's Awards.

However, when the cameras aren't rolling, Jayde still uses her degree in social work contributing to the Home of Hope For Girls; something she has always been passionate about.

## 12 Petite Noir, 28, Democratic Republic of the Congo SINGER, SONGWRITER AND PRODUCER

From the African soil to some of the world's greatest stages, Petite Noir embodies a modern African renaissance through his music and art.

He once opened for American Grammy award-winning singer Solange Knowles while she was on her 2013 US tour and performed at the South by Southwest festival in Texas.

In the 70s, an Angolan woman and Congolese man fell in love.

But due to the political instability in both countries, they fled to Belgium in search of a new start.

That new start birthed Yannick Ilunga, now popularly known as Petite Noir.

In 1993 they then moved to Cape Town where his love for music was awakened.

"I really started to fall in love with music at the age of 15. It was something that I automatically felt drawn to, so much so that I immersed myself in various music projects as much as I could," Noir tells FORBES AFRICA.

In 2012, he released his first single *Till We Ghosts*, which caught the eye of a music manager in the UK and wasting no time, Noir moved there.

The next year was his big break. He signed a £80,000 (\$103,305) deal and embarked on his first world tour, which spanned Africa, the UK, Europe and America.

"I toured with Solange and Foals [British rock band]; I played at festivals with line-ups that included the likes of Kendrick Lamar, Angélique Kidjo and many more," he says.

Since then, his career has been nothing short of greatness.

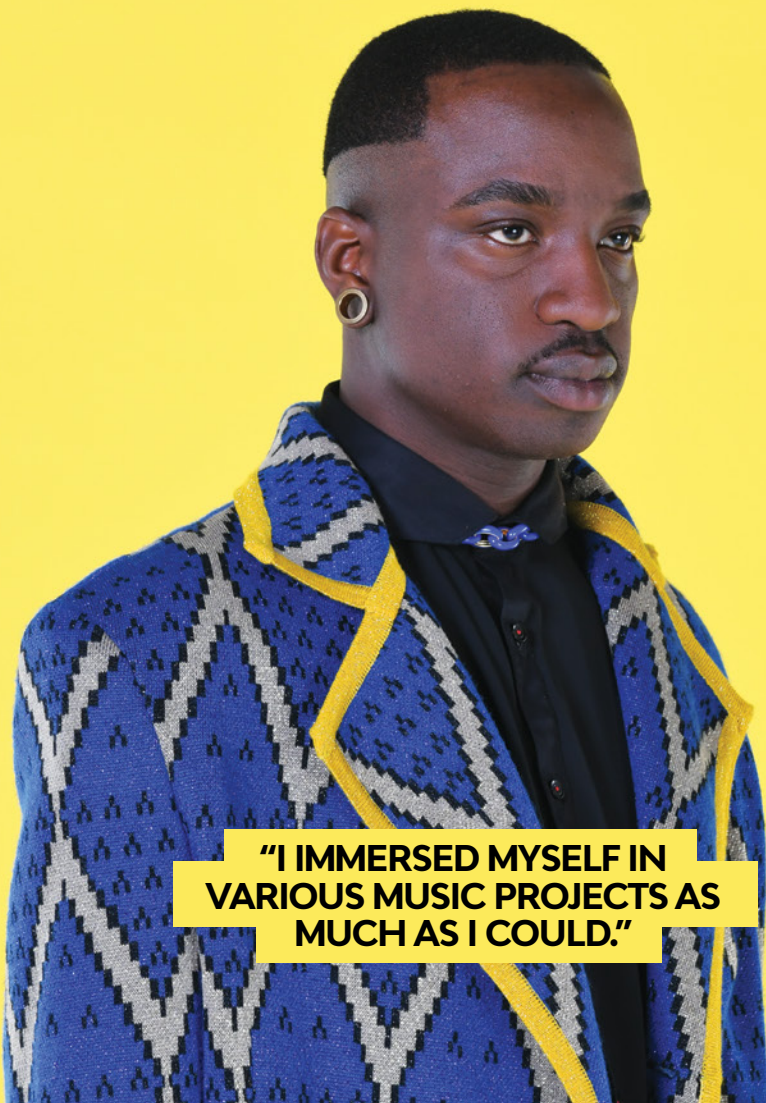
Together with his wife, Rochelle 'RhaRha' Nembhard, he has been working on a charity called the Noirwave foundation.

Noir is currently working on his own festival called 'No Borders', a celebration of the journey of immigrants through art and music.

Among some of his accolades is the South African Music Award 2016 for Best Alternative Album for *La Vie Est Belle/Life is Beautiful*.

The same year, he also received recognition for the album artwork and the video *Best* exhibited in the African art gallery at Harvard University.

With Solange inviting him to play in the US and American musician Mos Def being one of his advisors, Petite Noir is a name to remember and a wave to catch on to.



**"I IMMERSSED MYSELF IN VARIOUS MUSIC PROJECTS AS MUCH AS I COULD."**

## 13 Aisha Baker, 29, South Africa BUSINESSWOMAN, INFLUENCER AND STYLE ICON



**"I HAD ACCIDENTALLY FORMED A MEDIA COMPANY WITHOUT KNOWING."**

There are a few names that have become synonymous with South Africa's authority in the digital beauty industry and Aisha Baker is one of them.

Baker founded *BakedOnline* in 2009 when the blogging trend was fledgling in South Africa.

"I loved fashion, since I was introduced to Vogue Pattern books by my seamstress grandmother; I also loved literature and writing. It was a natural progression for me," she tells FORBES AFRICA.

At the age of 20, she began monetizing it.

"I had accidentally formed a media company without knowing. Having one employee at the time, my photographer Tegan Smith, who worked only for petrol money and great images," she says.

For one year, Baker worked a nine-to-five job at an embroidery factory to fund her business and would shoot content for her blog on weekends.

It was a stressful time.

"I got admitted to the ER because I thought I was having a heart attack. Turns out it was an ulcer caused by stress," she says.

Ten years later, her brand has since stayed relevant and picked up some awards along the way.

She graced the cover of the 2018 influencer issue of *Cosmopolitan* South Africa.

She has worked with brands such as Estée Lauder, Mercedes-Benz, Cotton, Mac, Woolworths and Microsoft to name a few.

Most recently, she was awarded the E! Africa Social Media Award at their Pop of Culture awards.



## 14 | Karun, 24, Kenya MUSICIAN

You might know Karun from the pop trio Kenyan group Camp Mulla, nominated for a BET Award in the US in 2012.

But this alternative R&B pop artist is now taking on the world solo and is one of Kenya's rising new wave artists.

Born Karungari Mungai, she started her music career at 14 and went on to attend the prestigious Berklee College of Music in the US.

Since then, she has had the opportunity to perform at live festivals and shows across the globe such as the SXSW 2015 (Austin TX) as part of the collective Cosmic Homies.

Karun also performed at

the Madaraka Festival (Seattle), Blankets & Wine in Kenya and most recently, the Africa Nouveau Festival, Kenya's most forward-thinking electric three-day music festival.

She has been covered by publications such as *The Fader* and *OkayAfrica* and local Kenyan publications such as *The Daily Nation*.

The young artist is currently working on a full-length project, and is in the process of planning a pan-African and northern hemisphere tour.

"The goal is to be the biggest female R&B act out of Africa. Watch this space," she tells us.

## 15 | Gilmore Moyo, 29, Zimbabwe CREATIVE DIRECTOR, FASHION FACILITATOR, TV & RADIO HOST AND FOUNDER: PAPER BAG AFRICA

Gilmore Moyo was named one of the 100 Most influential Zimbabweans Under 40 for 2018, alongside politician Nelson Chamisa and Minister of Sports, Arts and Recreation, Kirsty Coventry.

Moyo is known for his contribution to the Zimbabwean media and art scene.

He currently hosts and produces a radio show on *Cliff Central*, and also *Thatha Wena*, a conversational pan-African TV show.

Apart from his on-air talent, he also founded Paper Bag Africa, a content creation, public relations and management company.

His biggest highlight in the business was attaining a contract to manage the European Union Film Festival 2018, which ran over five days and showcased 10 films.

"Being an entrepreneur in Zimbabwe is the most difficult thing one has to go through. Funding is not available for you to grow your business and opportunities to attain



money aren't easily visible," he reflects.

Despite the challenges, he is optimistic about the future.

"Our ultimate goal is to become the 'go to' establishment for authentic African content," he says.



## 16 | Boitumelo 'Boity' Thulo, 29, South Africa TV HOST, ENTREPRENEUR AND MUSICIAN

Boitumelo 'Boity' Thulo wanted to pursue a career in criminology and psychology, but instead, has become one of the most recognized stars in South Africa's entertainment industry.

To think that her career started almost 10 years ago when she was cast in a lead role in an advert for an international restaurant chain, Thulo has since dabbled in various parts of the entertainment industry including TV hosting, acting, and music.

"There are so many highlights and standout moments in my career. But the one that always gives me goosebumps is my lead role on the Fergusons' *Rockville* [in 2013]. That role is what paved

the way to 'Boity' becoming a household name. I will forever be grateful to Connie and Shona Ferguson for believing in and trusting me with such a big role," she says.

Today, she also wears the entrepreneurial hat after founding Boity Toning Support, a weight loss supplement.

Last year, Thulo recorded her debut single *Wuz Dat* featuring Nasty C, also a former FORBES AFRICA 30 under 30 list-maker.

The song was nominated for best collaboration at the SA Hip Hop awards.

Thulo stays right on script as she further pursues acting, music, as well as developing more health products and nutritional supplements.

**17 | Hermann Kamte, 27, Cameroon**  
**ARCHITECT, FOUNDER AND CEO:**  
 HERMANN KAMTE & ASSOCIATES

At 26, Hermann Kamte delivered a keynote speech alongside Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Egypt's President, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, during the Africa 2018 Forum at Sharm el Sheikh, in Egypt. He was invited to speak about the future of African cities from the perspective of a creative architect. This has been one of his biggest highlights to date and this is the only beginning. Kamte is an award-winning Cameroonian architect with flair. He founded Hermann Kamte & Associates, an architectural firm that provides design, landscape, education, research and development services. One of his most notable works is the 'Lagos' Wooden Tower' that won him the American Architecture Award as well as the World Architecture Festival and Awards' inaugural WAFX Prize in 2017, known as the world's most forward-looking concept. "I think the desire to be an entrepreneur was very important



alongside the fear to fail," he says. "Being able to offer a useful service to the community is the first thing that drives my passion for architecture. I have to be a model for younger generations; I want to create a safe and secure environment for people, with sustainable projects," he adds. Kamte is well on his way to building a better tomorrow.

**18 | Helen Chukwu, 25, Nigeria**  
**FASHION DESIGNER, FOUNDER**  
**AND CEO: HELEN COUTURE**



Helen Chukwu is cut from a different cloth and it is no surprise that her designs have featured on *Vogue Arabia*. She started dressing up dolls as a child, and now dresses up brides for a living. At the age of 18, she became the founder and CEO of her design house, Helen Couture, which currently has operations in Nigeria, London and Dubai. One of her memorable highlights was a private showcase in London and having her dress worn by Katie Cleary, *America's Next Top Model* Cycle 1 contestant, at the 2013 Oscar Party. She is currently in the process of stocking her products in two stores each in the US, France and Italy. She and her team have started drawing up plans to raise capital and build a 10,000 garment-production-per-day garment manufacturing factory in Nigeria by 2021.

**19 | Luis Munana, 27, Namibia**  
**Creative Director, Model, TV**  
**HOST AND FOUNDER: VOIGUSH AFRICA**

You might remember his face from the ninth season of the reality television series *Big Brother Africa*, in 2014.

Since then, Luis Munana has been able to use his reality TV star status to good use.

Munana is a creative director of a children's TV show he founded in 2017 called *Waka Waka Moo*.

The original animated cartoon and puppet program became one of the first in Namibia.

"I was baby-sitting my niece and nephew and I saw them recite every single word from cartoons created in the western world. So, I decided to create Namibia's own cartoon and puppet show translated in all 11 Namibian languages. So, *Waka Waka Moo* was created," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

The animations educate children about Namibia's history, culture and heritage.

He has managed to expand *Waka Waka Moo* from being on TV to a tour reaching 44 rural primary schools in the country.

As for the hosting side of his career, Munana founded *Voigush Africa*, a lifestyle, fashion and entertainment TV show in 2014 inspired by the South African entertainment market.

"While studying in South Africa, I would go to auditions to shows like *V Entertainment*, *Top Billing* and *MTV Base Africa* but they would always tell me I am not South African. So, I came home and created my own show," he says.

*Voigush* has since covered music, lifestyle and fashion events across Africa which Munana produces, directs, scripts and edits himself.

As a jack of all trades, Munana proves that one can be talented both on and off screen.



**"I DECIDED TO CREATE NAMIBIA'S OWN CARTOON AND PUPPET SHOW TRANSLATED IN ALL 11 NAMIBIAN LANGUAGES."**



## 20 | Upile Chisala, 24, Malawi AUTHOR AND POET

Upile Chisala started writing at the age of four.

By the time she started primary school, there were piles of paper with little stories scattered around her house, in Zomba, Malawi, which was already chock-a-block with books.

But it took her years to embrace her talent.

After moving to the US, she studied sociology and graduated in 2015 but struggled to find a steady job.

She turned to poetry for comfort and self-published her first book at the age of 21.

It was her first collection of poetry called *Soft Magic*.

She continued her studies and enrolled for an MSc in African studies at the University of Oxford.

She revisited her writing and published a book called *Nectar* in 2017.

This brought the opportunity to travel

and do readings, but it was when she traveled to Johannesburg, South Africa, that her talent was reaffirmed.

“The room was filled with over 200 people who didn’t mind that there were no seats left for them. They were happy to stand and listen to me read from both books,” she says.

Next, she received an email from two Folio Literary Management agents in New York City.

In no time, Chisala signed a three-book deal with Andrews McMeel Publishing worth ‘hundreds of thousands US dollars’.

Since then, she founded Khala Series, a monthly mentorship program for writers in Johannesburg.

All profits from this series are donated.

“Khala is my way of giving back to the community,” she says.

## 21 | Joseph Awuah-Darko, 22, Ghana CONTEMPORARY ARTIST

In a dump site in Ghana near its capital Accra, Joseph Awuah-Darko stands holding a laptop in one hand and a face mask in another, like something out of an apocalypse movie.

He is dressed in orange overalls and there is e-waste as far as the eye can see; and the burning of the contents creates arid smoke in the background.

Darko is a contemporary artist, art collector and dealer and co-founder of the NGO, Agbogblo.Shine Initiative. The organization, which started in 2017, encourages people working at the dump to turn waste into high-end furniture.

His aim was to highlight the importance of the, “circular economy in the face of electronic waste degradation”.

While enrolled at Ashesi University in Ghana, he began educating himself about the obscure art market.

His first major sale was a 3D-printed life head he sold privately to a buyer for \$11,000 in 2017. Since then, more clients kept coming, trading the value of trash wish cash and this resulted in him becoming the Managing Director of



Africa Modern Art Fund at the young age of 22.

He presented a solo exhibition at Gallery1957; making him the youngest African contemporary artist to do so.

Prior to his contemporary art collector days, Darko was a musician under the alias ‘Okuntakinte’.

Darko is well on his way to getting a piece of the estimated \$60 billion global contemporary art industry.

## 22 | Joe ‘Human’ Nawaya, 25, Democratic Republic of the Congo GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND CO-FOUNDER: CREATIVE MIND SPACE

Joe ‘Human’ Nawaya was once enrolled for a degree in design at Pearson Institute in South Africa.

However, due to lack of finances, he had to drop out.

“At this point, I concluded that my life had stopped, I wasn’t going to be able to be anybody or make something of myself,” he tells FORBES AFRICA. However, this is not the design of his life as he was named *Fast Company SA’s* Top 20 Under 25 thanks to his passion and determination to pursue his first love, graphics and design.

His creative journey started when he was a child.

When his parents bought him a computer, the first application he used was paint.

Taking his passion to another level, he co-founded Creative Mind Space, together with his business partner Elliot Sithole.

It is an agency that focuses on creating content, designs, strategies, animation, and websites for brands.

Nawaya has been featured by *Destiny Man* as part of their Bold and Distinguished edition, positioning him as one of the most creative content



creators in South Africa. Additionally, Nawaya went on to become a lifestyle ambassador for Bespoken Man, a gentleman grooming brand focused on lifestyle and experience.

While there, he worked with brands like Jameson Irish Whiskey, MINI Cooper and Savanna Dry.

Nawaya currently co-hosts #TheThreadedExchange with Siya Beyile, a former FORBES AFRICA 30 UNDER 30 list-maker, on CliffCentral.

He has also recently launched a podcast called *Pioneers vs Pretenders* on Lutch, a digital podcasting company, which hosts a variety of podcasts online.

# 23

## Thando Thabethe, 29, South Africa ACTRESS, TV PRESENTER, AND RADIO DJ

Thando Thabethe is a jack of all trades.

She's a prominent name in South Africa's entertainment industry and has come to take it all.

Her acting career rose to prominence in early 2014 after her role on the South African soapie, *Generations: The Legacy*.

Her radio career dates back to the early days of 2008, having presented on the radio station of the University of Johannesburg.

But today, both her radio and acting careers have blossomed.

She currently has her own weekday radio show called *The Thabooty Drive*.

As for her acting, she moved from the small screen to the big screen, starring in the 2016 film

*Mrs Right Guy*, the 2018 film *Housekeepers* and most recently, the lead role in 2019's box office hit *Love Lives Here*.

This year, she was nominated for best TV host and best talk show for *Thando Bares All*, which aired on *TLC*, and she walked away with the award for Best Talk show.

"Focus on your own focus. I think when you follow your heart and you follow your own passion, everything else follows and those that need recognize and follow it will," she tells us.

Some of her achievements include being nominated for a SAFTA as the Best TV Presenter and for the Liberty Radio Awards as Best Drive Time presenter and for Best Drive Time Show.



**"WHEN YOU FOLLOW YOUR HEART AND YOUR OWN PASSION, EVERYTHING ELSE FOLLOWS"**

# 24

## Rich Fumani Mnisi, 27, South Africa FASHION DESIGNER



When Beyoncé Knowles-Carter came to South Africa for the Global Citizen Festival in December, she was spotted wearing items of clothing by local designer Rich Mnisi.

She was adorned in the custom RICH MNISI Rhundzu blouse and crocodile half-pleat skirt.

"Growing up, all I have always wanted to do was to design clothes that reflect my own energy and the love of coloring outside the lines. I have dreamed of my favorite icons wearing my clothes like any kid dreams of meeting their icons. Protect your dreams with all you have because they have the power to define your destiny," he said in an Instagram post after celebrating the iconic musician wearing his clothes.

In the short amount of time that Mnisi has been in the fashion industry, he has turned heads in South Africa's fashion industry and internationally, featuring in publications like *Vogue Italia*, *GQ*, *Financial Times*, *Marie Claire*, *ELLE* and *Vogue Russia*.

Mnisi is a graduate of LISOF (Leaders in the Science of Fashion) and was awarded the Africa Fashion International Young Designer of the Year 2014.

He also owns a furniture brand consisting of a chaise and a stool titled Nwa-Mulamula, after his late great-grandmother.

He is also the designer of the red Coca-Cola outfit worn by Karabo Poppy on the cover of the 2019 FORBES AFRICA 30 Under 30 list.



## 25 | Kevin Njue 27, Kenya PRODUCER, DIRECTOR, WRITER AND CEO: ROCQUE PICTURES

At university, Kevin Njue and his partner used his student loan of \$200 to direct and produce a short film that he had written in hostel. The film, *Sticking Ribbons*, was released in 2013 and Njue went on to win the award for Best East African Talent at the 2014 Zanzibar International Film Festival.

Njue used the monetary reward of \$1,000 to invest in his next short film, *Intellectual Scum*, which went on to screen in 15 film festivals globally.

"I was proud to thought-provoke the audience on the unequal racial relationships in Africa's cultural and political landscape," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

After gaining experience creating short films, Njue decided it was time to make bigger ones, a full-length feature film.

This ultimately led to him founding a

business in 2016, Rocque Pictures.

With only enough money just to register the business, he knocked on doors while pitching his first feature film, *18 HOURS*.

Of the \$45,000 dollars needed, he managed to raise \$13,000 from a university professor and an entrepreneur. In the end, the film was finished and launched in November 2017. It sold out at a cinema premiere in Nairobi.

In 2018, the film won the Best Overall Movie in Africa, Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Awards, making history as the first Kenyan film to be nominated and win in the history of the awards.

"As the CEO of Rocque Pictures, the goal is to set up a state-of-the-art film studio with a sound stage, backlot, a film park and an underwater film stage in Nairobi by 2030," he says.

## 26 | Sho Madjozi, 27, South Africa MUSICIAN

Sho Madjozi won the hearts of South Africans in the early days of 2017 and seemingly, everything she touches burst into a euphoric cornucopia of color in celebration her African heritage.

She introduced herself to the world as a Tsonga rapper with hits like *Gqi*, *Huku*, *Kona*, *Wakanda Forever*, and recently *Idhom*, bringing the XiTsonga language into the mainstream.

"I can't believe people tried to tell us we weren't dope for so long, now they see..." she says.

She is an artist for the people and whenever she performs, her energy is infectious.

She has played at festivals such as Afropunk, opened for artists like Travis Scott and Jidenna, and not to mention one of her highlight performances at the Global Citizen Festival in South Africa late last year.

The rising star was born Maya Wegerif in the small village of Shirley, deep in the province of the Limpopo province of South Africa.

After living in Tanzania, Senegal, and the US, Madjozi is fluent in Kiswahili, French and almost every South African language, making her pretty much a true global citizen.

Apart for her talented vocals, she also has a sense of style to match.



Her inspiration comes from the traditional Tsonga culture.

She has also teamed up with local designers to bring her first line of merchandise to fans, awakening her entrepreneurial spirit.

Her goal is to bring her culture to the world, which she continues to do so, staying true to her roots.

She was nominated for a BET Awards for Best New International Act, and recently bagged the Newcomer Of The Year and female artist of the year at the South African Music Awards.

## 27 | Sarah Owusu, 28, Ghana ARTIST AND PAINTER

It all started in the summer of 2012 when living in London, and Sarah Owusu was diagnosed with Bell's palsy which left the left side of her face paralyzed.

"During this very dark period of my life, I wouldn't leave my house except for my hospital appointments, and a few weeks into my diagnosis, I got a sudden urge to paint although I hadn't created anything for years," she tells FORBES AFRICA.

After gaining the courage to paint, she went to a cheap pound store and bought two blank canvases, cheap

paint and brushes.

Owusu's passion for art grew as she noticed the lack of black female artists in the industry.

One of the biggest highlights for the self-taught artist was last year when she was invited to present two of her paintings of the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo, at the Africa Business Summit in London Business School.

"My future plans are to have my artwork exhibited across the African continent, starting from my place of origin, Ghana," she says.





## 28 | Abisola Akintunde, 28, Nigeria FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR: MAKEUPBYASHABEE AND BEELASHES

They say beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, but for Abisola Akintunde, beauty is also in the brush stroke and makeup palette.

For three weeks, she worked for a dental clinic before deciding to venture into makeup full-time.

In 2012, she worked with *M-Net Africa Magic* doing make-up on a TV set while trying to set up her two businesses, Makeupbyashabee and Beelashes.

Soon enough, she started receiving bookings outside of her job at *M-Net* and had to quit and focus full-time on her entrepreneurial journey.

"It was a very bold and scary step because I was afraid I was going to leave a steady income for something not certain but like they say, 'don't be afraid,'" she tells FORBES AFRICA.

Akintunde took the bold step, bought her own car and set up her own studio and the rest has been a transformation for the better.

Since inception, MakeupbyAshabee has made

up over 200 brides across Africa including Nigeria, Ghana, Congo, South Africa and Kenya.

While with Beelashes, she says she sells over 5,000 units of beauty lashes per quarter.

Akintunde has hired a staff of 20 and has trained over 50 interns between 2017 and now.

As part of her philanthropic efforts, she has partnered with the Archbishop Vining Anglican Church in Lagos to train young women in the art of makeup.

She has also partnered with AfribeautyHub to empower young women in Ibadan in Oyo State, Nigeria, on makeup.

"The next goal at MakeupbyAshabee is to learn permanent makeup, the art of micro-blading and ombre brows," she says.

By doing this, she plans to bring something new to the table as micro-blading is an eyebrow embroidery procedure categorized under permanent makeup lasting for up to two years.

## 29 | Yaa Bonsu, 28, Kenya FASHION STYLIST AND CREATIVE

In 2017, Yaa Bonsu met international model Naomi Campbell who told her to believe in herself, and then signed a copy of her *Vogue* magazine.

Bonsu took her advice and has been climbing the international ladder in fashion since.

"I remember flipping through *Vogue* magazines when I was 15 years old and being engrossed in this glossy world. After I watched the film, *The Devil Wears Prada*, I knew the fashion world belonged to me," she says.

Today, she spends her days with runway models, designers and in the thick of fashion shoots for some of those glossy magazines.

In 2016, she relocated to Dubai where her career in the fashion industry took off.

She connected with industry powerhouses such as Naomi Campbell, Zeynab El-Helw and Shashi Menon.

She has had the opportunity to style an advertorial for the luxury brand Fendi, SS19, in April 2019.

The same year, she produced a fashion



editorial for *Revolution* magazine that featured high-end jewelry – Dior, de GRISOGONO, Bvlgari and Piaget, an achievement she says she is most proud of.

She has set her goals on becoming an internationally-renowned fashion powerhouse joining the leagues of icons Victoria Beckham, Edward Enninful and Vanessa Kingori.

## 30 | Paola Audrey Ndengue, 29, Cote d'Ivoire HOST AND PRODUCER AND CO-FOUNDER: FASHIZBLACK

Paola Audrey Ndengue is an entrepreneur and a creative with a higher calling.

Her mission has been to promote the French-speaking African creative scene to the world.

While studying in France, she became a fashion blogger and has since gained 10 years' experience in digital media.

She is currently the co-founder and creative director of *FASHIZBLACK*, a magazine focused on black and African fashion, designers, beauty and lifestyle.

And her most recent venture is *PANNELLE & Co*, a PR creative marketing and content agency in 2013.

She has worked with several international clients and artists such as Kiff No Beat (Côte d'Ivoire), Stanley Enow (Cameroon), Boddhi Satva (Central African Republic) and Canabasse (Senegal).

Both businesses she is involved in led to her being recognized as a finalist at the CNBC Africa All Africa Business Leaders Awards for the Young Business Leader of The Year in West Africa 2014.

Her growth since has been



phenomenal and she has featured in numerous publications including *Teen Vogue*, *CNN Africa* and *Forbes Afrique*.

She is currently working on Maybelline's first pan-African campaign, including several celebrities and influencers from Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria.

She was recently appointed the marketing manager of the first MTV Shuga Côte d'Ivoire, an international show educating young viewers about HIV/AIDS, an opportunity that will enlarge Ndengue's reach.

1

## Clarence Munyai, 21, South Africa

TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Clarence Munyai is right on track to becoming one of the world's greatest athletes as he shatters more records.

Munyai is the third-fastest all-time junior in the 100 meters-race.

He currently holds the South African record of 19.69 in the 200 meters right under Usain Bolt who holds the record for 19:19.

Munyai also holds the Junior World Record of the 300 meters.

"I have been blessed with a talent to run fast and become a professional athlete, and am thankful every day for the opportunity to pursue my dreams and make a better life for myself and my family," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

He made his mark in the 200 meters World Junior ranking in 2017 and 13th in the 200 meters world senior ranking the same year.

Last year, he smashed the 200 meters record in a time of 19.69 seconds, making him the 10th fastest in the world ever, as he knocked off Wayde van Niekerk's mark of 19.84.

Munyai is one of the youngest South African Olympians of all time and has always remained modest on and off the track.

Kim Collins, 2003 world champion in the 100 meters, once told Munyai to 'always stay humble' as he was.

Despite his global achievements, he says there is no better feeling than wearing the country's green and gold colors.

"My immediate plans are to win gold at the World Championships in Doha later this year, and then, of course, focus on Tokyo 2020. Apart from that, I know there is life after athletics and so am looking into various business opportunities," he says.



2

## Jean Sseninde, 26, Uganda

FOOTBALLER AND CEO

Jean Sseninde is one to watch on and off the pitch.

When she was eight years old, she began playing football with her brother in her home in Kasangati village in Uganda. That experience got the ball rolling.

She currently plays for the Ugandan national team.

Internationally, she plays for Queens Park Rangers W.F.C in the FA Women's National League South in England, making her the first Ugandan female to sign with the team. Sseninde also previously played for the AFC Phoenix Women's Football Club and the Charlton Athletic Women's Football Club.

Although she enjoys an international career in football, her biggest highlight remains playing for her national team.

In 2016, the Uganda women's National football team qualified to play in the semi-finals of the Council of East and Central Africa Football Association (CECAFA) Women Championships against Burundi.

"The only goal that was scored was from my assist," she tells FORBES AFRICA.

Sseninde is the founder and CEO of the Sseninde Women's Development Cup and the founder of the Jean Sseninde Foundation, which sponsors the annual Jean Sseninde Women Football Development Tournament, aimed at discovering and mentoring female soccer talent in Uganda.

Sseninde is also the first African and sole female player from the continent to join the Common Goal initiative an organization whose members pledge to give away at least 1% of their annual salary to charity.

Last year, she scooped an award for her philanthropic work at the Best Of Africa Awards event at the Rosewood in London.



### 3 | Mohamed Salah, 27, Egypt FOOTBALLER

On June 1, 2019, the world watched as Liverpool made history, beating Tottenham Hotspur in the UEFA Champions League final as Egyptian-born Mohamed Salah led the team to victory.

Salah scored the first goal of the match and in the end, the team had a 2-0 victory. Dressed in the team's shirt, red as his blood, and with curly locks, Salah raised the trophy with pride in celebration while immersed in a sea of red on the pitch. He was this year's only footballer on the list of *Time Magazine's* 100 Most Influential that called him "one of the best football players in the world".

The iconic figure started his professional career nine years ago playing for the Egyptian Premier League.

Thereafter, his career went international when he played for Basel, a team in

Switzerland and then Chelsea.

In 2017, he then signed with Liverpool at a club-record fee of £36.9 million (\$46.6 million).

He has since won numerous awards and accolades such as the PFA Players' Player of the Year, the Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year and the PFA Fans' Player of the Year. His next goal is to conquer the next season of the Premier League.

He is currently sponsored by Adidas and has appeared on Adidas commercials alongside David Beckham, Lionel Messi and Paul Pogba, and singer Pharrell Williams.

With a total of 148 goals scored in his professional clubs' career, Salah is a name that will definitely go down in history books. He is one of the highest-earning sport stars in the world.

### 4 | Wayde van Niekerk, 26, South Africa TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

The man currently holding the world and Olympic record in the 400 metres was born in a small town in Kraaifontein, in Cape Town.

As a child, Wayde van Niekerk dreamed of being the fastest man in the world and he is evidence that dreams do, in fact, come true. The world took notice of him when he won gold at the World Championships in 2016.

Since then, he has shown no signs of slowing down.

He came first in the 2016 Olympic Games in the 400 meters in Rio de Janeiro, and again in the 2017 World Championships in London.

However, due to a knee injury, Van Niekerk was unable to participate in any games last year and he is still on his road to recovery.

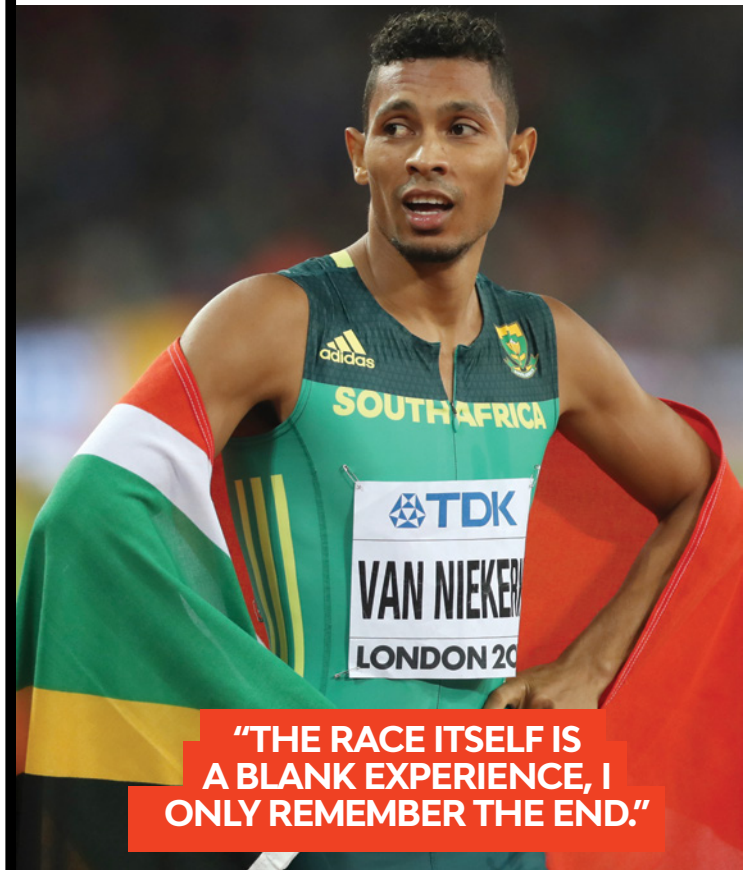
After the long and painful wait, he returns to the track and is set to compete in the IAAF World Championships in Doha in September, alongside many other

world stars. Usain Bolt, world record holder in the 100 metres and now Van Niekerk's good friend, told FORBES AFRICA, when he visited South Africa this year, about what advice he gave the South African athlete.

"I always tell Wayde, 'it is good to be fast and to be great, but if you want to build your brand you have to show your personality'. People will want you to be a part of their brand," Bolt said.

After news that he had temporarily withdrawn from athletics due to his injury, he showed love to his fans by tweeting that he was determined to race again. Many look forward to his return this month and, perhaps, more records to be broken.

"The race itself is a blank experience, I only remember the end. All stresses disappear right there. It's about me giving my everything and leaving it all there on the track," he told FORBES AFRICA after his 2016 win.



**"THE RACE ITSELF IS A BLANK EXPERIENCE, I ONLY REMEMBER THE END."**



## 5 | Chad le Clos, 27, South Africa SWIMMER

“Seas the day”, are words multiple Olympic medallist Chad le Clos lives by.

His claim to fame is being an Olympic, World and Commonwealth Games swimming champion.

He is also the record holder in the 50-meter and 100-meter butterfly.

Born in Durban, South Africa, Le Clos began swimming competitively from the age of 10.

By the time he was 20, he beat his hero, Michael Phelps, by 0.05 seconds at the London 2012 Summer Olympics in the men's 200 meters

butterfly, and the world stood still.

Phelps had held that record and the arrival of a young South African caused a huge splash.

History was made and Le Clos continues to do so today.

On top of the many accolades, last year, he was named FINA Male Swimmer of the Year 2018.

He is currently doing plenty of swimming drills in preparation for Tokyo 2020.

The proud South African swimmer goes to show that where there's a will, there's a wave.



## 7 | Jacob Kiplimo, 18, Uganda TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Jacob Kiplimo can run for miles. At only 18, Kiplimo is a World Cross Country silver medallist.

He grew up in Bukwo on Mount Elgon in Uganda.

Making his debut internationally, he did what many 15-year-olds could only dream of.

He won the 10,000 meters bronze medal at the 2016 IAAF World U20 Championships.

His achievements put him in the running to be selected as part of Uganda's Olympic team, making him one of the country's youngest Olympians.

In 2017, he came first at the World Cross Country Championships in the junior men's race.

Even when playing among the seniors, Kiplimo is still a top athlete.

This year, he was second at the World Cross Country Championships in Denmark.

According to the IAAF, he currently ranks fourth in the world for the men's 10,000 meters.

As he continues to make a run for the top spot, he shows no signs of letting the dust settle.

Watch this space for more.

## 6 | Genzebe Dibaba, 28, Ethiopia TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Genzebe Dibaba is a woman always gunning for gold.

With 10 gold medals already to her name, she continues to run the distance and surpass many alongside her. She currently holds five world records; for the indoor and outdoor 1,500 meters, the indoor 300 meters, the indoor 500 meters and the indoor mile.

This makes her one of the best female track mile runners in history. The last two gold medals she won for Ethiopia were at the 2018 World Indoor Championships in Birmingham for the 1,500 meters and 3,000 meters.

The 28-year-old's talents, however, run in the family. She has three siblings who are also gold and silver medal athlete winners.

The Ethiopian world record



holder continues to run for her life as she remains unbeaten in the 1,500 meters since the European Championships in Berlin in 2015.

Since then, she has received a number of accolades, including the Laureus Sportswoman of the Year in 2015, and IAAF Athlete of the Year 2015.

## 8 | Sara Ahmed, 21, Egypt WEIGHTLIFTER

Sara Ahmed is living proof that women can do absolutely anything and be great at it.

At only 21, she is the first Egyptian woman to receive an Olympic weightlifting medal.

Once, she had to miss her high school exams to compete at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

Through the sacrifice, she has a great support system lifting her every step of the way.

Ahmed's passion for weightlifting comes from her father and older brother who were national competitors in weightlifting.

Among some of her accolades are nine international gold medals, including two golds won at the 2012 Junior African Championships and Youth African Championships.

Her most recent gold medal was last year at the World Junior Championships for 71kg.





**9** | **Luvo Manyonga, 28, South Africa**  
TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Luvo Manyonga did not grow up with much but he had plenty to look forward to. When he started doing long jump in school, he fell in love with it instantly.

“Ever since, I wanted to break the world record,” he tells FORBES AFRICA.

And in 2017, he did just that, becoming the world champion as well as holding the first place in the world rankings.

The same year, he won South African

Sportsperson of the Year and South African Sports Star of the Year. His goals this year are to defend the world championship title in Doha, break the nine-meter barrier and defend the Diamond League title.

“There is always life after sport and I am looking at various business opportunities because I know that it’s so important for an athlete to plan for post-career while still competing,” he says.

**“IT’S SO IMPORTANT FOR AN ATHLETE TO PLAN FOR POST-CAREER WHILE STILL COMPETING.”**

**10** | **Giana Lofty, 24, Egypt**  
MARTIAL ARTS PRACTITIONER

Giana Lofty started practising karate when she was only six years old.

Now, she practises it internationally, representing her country.

Lofty is the current world title-holder and the 2014 continental title-holder, making the 24-year-old a certified two-time champion.

She won gold last year at the 2018

African Karate Championships in Kigali.

This year, she won silver at the Karate1 Premier League in Rabat, Morocco.

In an interview with *Olympic Channel*, she said, “I encourage girls to start practising karate or any martial arts for self-defence”.

She is one of over 1.5 million Egyptians doing so and one of the very few women dominating it.

“Girls are not allowed to practise any kind of sport, not only karate. So, sometimes they say that what I’m doing is something useless which is against our beliefs. But I don’t think that, so I don’t care what they say,” she said.

It was a milestone for Lofty when in 2013, women were allowed to fight wearing a hijab, allowing her to do what she loves while still staying true to who she is.



**11** | **Beatrice Chepkoech, 24, Kenya**  
TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

She’s fast, tall and currently holds the world record for the 3,000 meters steeplechase, and her name is Beatrice Chepkoech.

After clocking a running time of 8:44.32 in 2018, the Kenyan became the first woman to break 8:50 and 8:45.

Her career started in 2014 as a road runner. She later switched to track and field in 2015, making

that one of the best decisions she ever made.

Among some of the medals she bagged are the two gold medals she received last year; one at the 2018 Ostrava IAAF Continental Cup and the other at the 2018 Asaba Nigeria African Championships.

She is ahead of the pack and shows no signs of looking back.



# 12 | Patricia Apolot, 28, Uganda KICKBOXER

Patricia Apolot is not one to mess with. She once punched a fraudster and he landed in a drain.

With agility, grace and the heart of a lioness, Apolot's fighting spirit has seen her winning world titles and putting Uganda on the map through kickboxing. Also known as the 'Black Pearl', Apolot started her career in 2014.

She grew up in Ngora, Uganda; her family was barely able to afford three meals a day or give her clothes to wear.

Enduring a disadvantaged life, there was only one thing on her mind as a child, to be 'the world's best' and that's exactly who she's become, in her chosen field.

She is currently the reigning

Ugandan female kickboxing champion and holds the International Kickboxing Federation title for lightweight.

She earned her title after beating Ivana Mirkov of Serbia in Dunaujváros, Hungary, in 2015.

This made her the first female Ugandan kickboxer to win this title.

She still holds the title and has been defending it for three years now, making her undoubtedly the queen of kickboxing.

Apolot shares her skills and talent training youngsters in kickboxing in her hometown in Uganda.

"I want to believe that a world or a sport without boundaries is a country or a sport well-spoken," she says.



**"WHEN I WALK ONTO THAT TRACK, I PERFORM. SO, WHEN I PERFORM, I EXPECT PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE MY WORK."**



# 13 | Caster Semenya, 28, South Africa TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Caster Semenya is the name of the 800 meters queen dominating headlines in the sporting world.

She has won over 15 international gold medals and the South African golden girl has no intentions of stopping any time soon.

In a recent controversy (where the IAAF wants female athletes with high testosterone levels to take testosterone blockers), the Swiss Supreme Court denied the IAAF's request to immediately reimpose the regulation on Semenya.

This means Semenya is free to compete without restriction in the female category until the IAAF and Athletics South Africa make submissions to the Supreme Court on her request that the IAAF regulations be suspended throughout the entire appeal process.

But Semenya is not moved and she continues to hold her head high. To many, she remains a champion winning on and off the field.

In an interview with

FORBES WOMAN AFRICA late last year, she said: "I like to be myself, I am true to myself. I just like myself the way I am and I don't want anything to change in me."

"When I walk onto that track, I perform. So, when I perform, I expect people to recognize my work but not just because I am me, but for the work that I do."

Semenya has plans to continue racing, winning more golds and flying the South African flag high.

"I don't see myself stepping down; until I'm 40, that's when I'll be satisfied," she said. Some of her accolades include awards at the South African Sport Awards; the People's Choice Sports Star of the Year, Sports Woman Of The Year, and the Sports Star Of The Year.

She was also nominated for the 2018 Female World Athlete of the Year at the IAAF Athletics Awards.

You cannot put a price tag on an athlete like Semenya. She describes herself as just being "priceless".



**14 | Emmanuel Korir, 24, Kenya**  
TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

As the sixth ranked fastest athlete in the men's 800 meters, of all time, Emmanuel Korir keeps flying Kenya's flag high.

According to the IAAF, last year, he won all but one of his races.

He holds the record for the fastest outdoor time of the year, winning at the IAAF Diamond League meeting in London last year.

He clocked 1:42.05, making it the world's fastest 800 meters performance since 2012.

He was nominated for the Male Athlete of the Year award in 2018 by

the IAAF and won two gold medals at the African Championships, as well as the Continental Cup.

His current world ranking, according to the IAAF, is first place in the 800 meters.

He plans to set records at the World Championships in Doha this year.

"I can't go and sleep even after the season ends. I have to work harder to be ready for Doha. It is a title that I long for in between now and then," Korir told Capital Sports last year. He is also signed to Nike.



**"A WOMAN CAN DO EVERYTHING!"**

**15 | Faith Kipyegon, 25, Kenya**  
TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

It is said that when Faith Kipyegon was a baby, she completely skipped the crawling stage and went straight to walking. She certainly has not stopped since.

Speaking to *NTV Kenya*, Mzee Kipyegon revealed that his daughter was extraordinary growing up.

As an adult, she is one of Kenya's long-distance trailblazers.

Her last international race saw her winning gold and beating one of the world's best,

Caster Semena, at the World Championships in London in 2017.

She recently returned to the track from maternity leave making her first return to action in two years, and is currently training for the next big race at the 2020 Olympics.

Kipyegon also won gold at the 2016 Summer Olympics and gold at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

She has stood on pedestals with the world's best, and will continue to stand tall.



**16 | Francine Niyonsaba, 26, Burundi**  
TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Francine Niyonsaba made history in 2016 when she won Burundi's first Olympic medal in 10 years.

She won a silver medal, finishing second in the 800 meters Rio de Janeiro Olympics race.

She came second to her rival on the track and friend off the track, Caster Semena.

Since then, she has gained speed at earning the gold medals at the 800 meters at the 2016 World Indoor Championships in Portland, and last year, at the World Indoor Championships in Birmingham.

For Niyonsaba, running had always been in her blood.

When speaking to FORBES AFRICA last year, she said that the challenge women face in Burundi is that they feel they can't achieve anything elsewhere in the world.

"In Burundi, in our culture, women believe they cannot do something special in the world, but it is just a mentality," she said. "A woman can do everything!"

This year, Niyonsaba revealed that she would be affected by the IAAF ruling on Semena.

In an interview with *Olympic Channel*, she openly discussed her hyperandrogenism and the difficulties she has faced in becoming a top-level athlete.

"For sure, I didn't choose to be born like this, what am I?...I love myself, I will still be Francine. I will not change," she told them.

The 26-year-old is passionate about inspiring other women in sport and putting Africa on the map.

She ranks third in the Women's 800m in the IAAF world rankings.



## 17 | Kagiso Rabada, 24, South Africa CRICKETER

Kagiso Rabada's bowling style is nothing short of a visual treat as he has been known to make many seasoned cricketers feel rather googly as his balls approach them.

Last year, he became the youngest bowler to take 150 test wickets, and Wisden named him the Best Young Player In The World.

His rise to fame in the cricket world was as fast as the balls he delivers.

He had his biggest year in 2016 as he went home with six awards at Cricket South Africa's annual dinner, including the prize for Cricketer of the Year.

He currently is a fast bowler for the Highveld Lions, a South African cricket team, as well as the national team, the Proteas.

Off the field, Rabada, known as KG, is humble and grounded.

The cricket star founded an initiative called Inspire and Ignite under his foundation, the Kagiso Rabada Foundation. It was reported that early this year he sponsored 2,500 youth under the age of 25 with sports equipment to advance their talent and skills.

It's best not to take your eyes off him.



## 19 | Sadio Mané, 27, Senegal FOOTBALLER

Sadio Mané comes from Bambali, a village in Senegal where boys play street football until sunset with red earth clinging on to their clothes.

Now, Mané currently captains the Senegal National Team and is a winger for Premier League club Liverpool.

He started his career at a Senegalese football academy, then made his international debut for Metz, a French football team in 2012. He played for FC Red Bull Salzburg and Southampton before moving on to Liverpool in 2016 for a fee of £34 million (\$43 million), making him the most expensive African player in history, at that time.

Last year, he scored a hat-trick for the club and overtook fellow countryman Demba Ba's record of 43, to become the highest-scoring Senegalese in Premier League history.

Since then, he has become one of the top performers in the team.

He was joint recipient of the Premier League Golden Boot with 22 goals, and was part of the Liverpool team that won the 2019 UEFA Champions League Final.

With his impressive record in the Premier League, the Senegalese won Premier League Player of the Month in August 2017 and March 2019. He was also awarded the Premier League Golden Boot 2018 and 2019. On the continent, he has represented the Senegal national team at the 2012 Olympics, 2015 and 2017 Africa Cup of Nations, and the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Speaking to *BBC*, Fodé Boucar Dahaba, the President of the Regional League, says that whenever Mané returns home, he remains humble and dressed in shorts like everyone else in the village.

## 18 | Ruhan van Rooyen, 24, South Africa PARALYMPIC TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Ruhan van Rooyen was born with cerebral palsy in his lower left arm and foot.

But that has not stopped him from representing his country internationally in track and field.

Van Rooyen is a Paralympics athlete from the Western Cape in South Africa specializing in the 100 meters and 200 meters T37.

He made his debut in 2013 when he was named Junior Athlete of the Year by the South African Sports Association for the Physically Disabled.

One of his biggest achievements was being selected to compete at the 2017 World Championships in London, England.

He ranked sixth in the World Championships at the 200 meters T37 and 100 meters T37, while locally, he ranked second in both events.

Next on his agenda is to compete at the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

When he isn't on the track, he doubles up as a YouTuber, enjoys cycling and is also pursuing a career as a chartered accountant.

His coach said in one of his



*YouTube* videos that "Ruhan is a very dedicated athlete".

"I really believe Ruhan has what it takes to, not only be top three in the world, but to be the best in his events which is the 100 and 200 meter sprints," he said.

# 20

## Sabrina Simader, 21, Kenya ALPINE SKIER

Sabrina Wanjiku Simader was born in Kilifi, a small town on the coastal city of Mombasa, Kenya, unaware that one day she would be conquering winter slopes in the alpine ski world.

Today, the 21-year-old Kenyan is a world-renowned ski racer.

But she is as humble as her early days on the mountain slopes.

She learned to ski in Hansberg, a small mountain in Austria. "Even as a little girl, I was fascinated by the white sparkling snow and the wonderful feeling of riding down the slopes," she says. With some encouragement from her step-dad, a passionate skier at one time, she decided to pursue skiing. Her biggest achievement was when she

became a triple Styrian champion in the Super G, giant slalom, combination and second in the Slalom in 2012.

"He was always proud of me and took a lot of time to train and support me in all races. Unfortunately, in June 2012, he died too early. For my mum and I, things became very difficult," she says.

Her ski coach Christian Reif, coach of the Kenya National Ski Team, took on the ropes to groom her in the winter sport.

"Sabrina is for Kenya and for the whole world an inspiration, as a real Kenyan not from an alpine nation. And she shows that nothing is impossible, and you can reach anything with intensive work, effort and discipline," he tells FORBES AFRICA.

Simader represented Kenya at the Winter Youth Olympics in 2016 in Lillehammer, Norway.

She was nominated for the Sports Woman of the Year and the Youth of the Year awards in the African Women in Europe organization 2017.

She plans to conquer the Winter Olympic Games in 2022 in China and the Alpine Ski World Championships in Italy in 2021, making her the second Kenyan after Philip Boit to represent the East African nation at the Winter Games.

She founded the Kenya Ski Association to groom other young Kenyans in the sport.

**"EVEN AS A  
LITTLE GIRL, I WAS  
FASCINATED BY THE  
WHITE SPARKLING  
SNOW AND THE  
WONDERFUL  
FEELING OF RIDING  
DOWN THE SLOPES."**



## 21 | Gerson Domingos, 23, Angola BASKETBALLER

Gerson Domingos is one of the youngest players in the Angolan national basketball team and he plays a very important position, point guard.

He was named Most Valuable Player at The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) Africa U18 Championship 2014, and he is part of the new generation of Angola's young talent.

He made his debut for the senior team in 2016 at the Belgrade FIBA Olympic Qualifying Tournament 2016. He wears Angola on his heart and hopes to go down in their history books.

In an interview with FIBA, he said: "I have always dreamed of playing against the best teams in the world, and if I am healthy, I will do everything to keep the Angolan flag flying high. We have a history of playing at big basketball events and I hope to be part of Angola's successful history."

Angola is ranked in the top 50 national teams according to FIBA world rankings.

22

**Siya Kolisi, 28, South Africa**  
RUGBY PLAYER

Siya Kolisi stands as a dream fulfilled for the South African nation when he became the first-ever black captain of the Springboks.

It was exactly a year ago when he first captained South Africa's national rugby team, the Springboks, on home turf against England while donning the number 6 jersey, the number famously worn by Nelson Mandela at the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

It was a step in the right direction, echoing Mandela's vision which sought to unite a racially divided South Africa through rugby that year.

"Sport has the power to change the world... It has the power to inspire," he said to the thousands.

Twenty-four years later, Kolisi has inspired many as well.

"I've learned that no matter

where you come from, or what your background is, you can aspire to be whatever you want to be," he said in an Instagram post.

Weighing 102kg, just shy of the average rugby player's weight estimated to be 105.1kg, he carries the hopes of many on his shoulders.

He also captains the Stormers, a team which is part of the South African Rugby Union, and is based in the Western Cape province.

Despite his knee injury preventing him from playing, many hope for his return this month in a shortened Rugby Championship against Australia at Ellis Park in Johannesburg.

This year, Kolisi was nominated for a prestigious Laureus Sports Award under the category of Sporting Moment of the Year for his role in 'uniting the rainbow nation'.



**"IT'S BEEN A LONG AND HARD ROAD, BUT I'M HERE NOW."**



23

**Thembi Kgatlane, 23, South Africa**  
FOOTBALLER

The dusty grounds of Mohlakeng, a township west of Johannesburg, is where Thembi Kgatlane honed her talents.

Yet, on some of the world's greenest international pitches is where she won her awards.

Whenever she gets the ball, she displays sophisticated athleticism, making it difficult to take your eyes off her as she leverages speed, agility and impressive dribbling skills to get the ball behind the net.

Kgatlane is a product of South Africa's Banyana Banyana women's football team, and she also plays for the Beijing BG Phoenix FC in the Chinese Women's Super League.

She also previously played for Houston Dash in Texas, US.

When speaking to FORBES WOMAN AFRICA late last year, she said her goal had always been to play abroad and make a living out of her passion.

"It's a dream I have been working towards for the whole of my life, since I started playing as an eight-year-old, working my way through the junior national teams, then to the senior national team. It's been a long and hard road, but I'm here now," Kgatlane said. After representing South Africa at the 2018 Africa Women Cup of Nations, she was named Player of the Tournament and was the highest goal scorer.



## 24 | Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, 29, Gabon FOOTBALLER

If there's one person who loves the biggest blockbuster movie of 2018, *Black Panther*, it is Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang. After scoring two goals for Arsenal against Rennes earlier this year, the footballer celebrated by wearing a *Black Panther* mask and did the signature pose with his two arms crossed over his chest.

It was a true 'Wakanda Forever' moment.

When interviewed after the match by *BT Sport*, he said: "I needed a mask [which would] represent me so it's *Black Panther* and in Gabon, we call the national team the panthers of Gabon, so it represents me."

Loved by many back home, Aubameyang is a superhero in his own right. He has previously won African Footballer of the Year, Top Scorer and the French League Cup.

This year, he received the Golden Boot.

The 29-year-old Gabonese professional footballer plays for the Arsenal in the Premier League and is the captain of the Gabon national team.

It seems the apple has not fallen far from the tree as, Aubameyang's father, Pierre-François Aubameyang "Yaya", is a retired Gabonese international and national footballer.

## 25 | Aphiwe Dyantyi, 24, South Africa RUGBY PLAYER

Last year, Aphiwe Dyantyi won the Breakthrough Player Year Award at the World Rugby Awards for his outstanding performance on the field.

An emotional Dyantyi accepted his award in Monte Carlo, Monaco.

"It's been a blessing. I have been truly blessed in so many ways and the people that I have had around me, people that have helped me in the last few years have truly been amazing," he said as part of his acceptance speech.

Dyantyi has been described as a natural-born player and his skills on the field can attest to that.

Coming from humble beginnings, he was born in Ngcobo in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa.

He plays for the South

African national team, the Springboks.

He also plays for the Lions in Super Rugby, the Golden Lions in the Currie Cup and the Golden Lions XV in the Rugby Challenge.

He started his career in rugby while he was studying at the University of Johannesburg (UJ).

There, he played for the UJ senior team in the Varsity Cup before moving to play in the provincial championships.

Dyantyi not only strives to make a difference for his country but also for those around him.





## 26 | Percy Tau, 25, South Africa FOOTBALLER

He plays for the Union SG and Premier League club Brighton & Hove Albion, and the South African national team, Bafana Bafana.

His football career started in 2013 when he played for Mamelodi Sundowns in the Premier Soccer League.

Since then, he has kicked it up a notch and has been climbing the football ladder. He made his debut with English Premier League club Brighton & Hove Albion last year, signing a four-year contract.

However, Tau experienced issues obtaining a UK work permit and was loaned out to join Union SG, a Belgium football club.

The loan was a blessing in disguise for Tau as he went on to score four goals for the team in six appearances, helping the club reach the semi-finals.

He then won the Player of the Season award and was in the league's team of the season.

Last year, he was one of South Africa's goal scorers as the nation recorded its largest-ever victory with a 6-0 win over Seychelles in an Africa Cup of Nations qualifier.

He won Premier Soccer League's Player of the Season for 2017 to 2018.

But what makes this Mpumalanga-born South African one of the most talked-about footballers in the country?

When speaking to local publication *Sport24*, Tau expressed his love for football no matter where he plays.

"I think everyone is happy when they're playing football, so, yeah... football is football. Regardless of where you play, if you focus on the football, then everything else becomes easier," he said.

## 27 | Quinton de Kock, 26, South Africa CRICKETER

This Johannesburg-born 26-year-old is a wicketkeeper and batsman known for his fearless striking and handy glove work.

Early in his career, he has been compared to some of the greats in cricket like Adam Gilchrist and Mark Boucher.

Cricket experts have considered him to be one of the most promising young wicketkeepers of this decade.

He plays for the South African national team, the Proteas, a local team called the Titans and

internationally, for the Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League.

He made his debut for the national T20 team against New Zealand in 2012, scoring 28 off 23 balls while chasing.

Since then, he has been making quite an impression in the sport.

He was named Cricketer of the Year at Cricket South Africa's 2017 Annual Awards.

One of his other milestones is being the fastest South African to reach 1,000 ODI runs.





## 28 | Alex Iwobi, 23, Nigeria FOOTBALLER

If your uncle is award-winning Nigerian professional footballer, Jay-Jay Okocha, it is possible those good genes would place you at the top tier of the football ladder.

Alex Iwobi is blessed to live up to his uncle's legacy.

Iwobi has been described as smooth and dangerous with the ball.

At only 23, he is skilled on the pitch and shows promise as he is one of Africa's rising football stars.

Iwobi currently plays for Premier League club Arsenal and the Nigerian national team, the Super Eagles.

He was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and left his home country at the age of four.

He joined Arsenal in 2004, however, started playing with

the senior team in 2015.

In that same year, he started playing for Nigeria, making his debut at the 2016 Summer Olympics when he was selected for their 35-man provisional squad.

The following year, he scored for Nigeria in a 1-0 win over Zambia.

This secured the Super Eagles a spot at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

Speaking to *BBC Sport* earlier this year, he said he was proud to be related to Okocha.

"I can never get tired of people comparing us. I see my uncle as an idol, someone I have always looked up to as a footballer," he said.

"I still have a long way to go, maybe one day, I can be on his level or greater."



## 29 | Akani Simbine, 25, South Africa TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Akani Simbine was born a winner.

Born in Kempton Park, South Africa, Simbine has lifted the coveted crown as the country's fastest man.

He broke the South African record in the 100 meters with a time of 9.89 seconds in 2016, which became one of his personal bests. He further sped on to win more accolades.

His current world ranking position, according to the IAAF, is sixth on the men's 100 meters.

Among the 10 international medals he has, five of them are gold.

Simbine has been nothing short of consistent; he remains one of South Africa's best track and field champions. He currently has deals with Mercedes-Benz and Adidas.



## 30 | Margaret Nyairera Wambui, 23, Kenya TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE

Margaret Wambui won her first international gold medal when she was only 19, at the World Junior Championships in the US.

She went from running in a small town in Nyeri County, Kenya, to some of the world's largest arenas.

Today, she has over four more international accolades, including a bronze medal from the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games.

By then, she had her signature celebration style ready, placing one hand on the hip and the other in the air with a triumphant beaming smile.

Last year, she earned herself a second spot at the Commonwealth Games in Australia, receiving the

silver medal, after Caster Semenya.

Like Semenya, Wambui has also been faced with questions regarding her testosterone levels.

However, according to reports, she has not been forced to undergo tests for hyperandrogenism.

Her current world ranking, according to the IAAF, in the Women's 800 meters is 15.

At only 23, Wambui has achieved only what some of her peers dream of.

Imagine what the next seven years have in store for her. A gold medal for Kenya is closer than we think.

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# 2019 HERALDS A NEW DAWN



Khulu Sibiya accepting the winning trophy for Team SuperSport.



Individual champion, Kevin Janse van Rensburg.

**S**ixteen years after its first edition in the Drakensberg in South Africa, the BCX SuperSport Shootout made its way to the Drakenstein Municipality, contested on the Pearl Valley Jack Nicklaus Signature Course at Val de Vie estate on Saturday May 18th 2019.

Val de Vie, established in 2005, hosted the event for the first time, having acquired and incorporated the Pearl Valley course into its offering in 2016. At the opening function, hosted by renowned chef Reuben Riffel at his recently established 'Reuben's & Co. Café' on the estate, there was plenty of

banter between the two team captains in the Ryder Cup-styled team competition, Jonas Bogoshi of Team BCX and Gideon Khobane of Team SuperSport, CEOs of their respective businesses.

Since the team competition had been established, the-then Team Telkom had won the first two titles, only for Team SuperSport to claim the trophy in 2017 and 2018. Two-all going in to the 2019 event. As usual, in addition to the team competition – played on a better-ball matchplay basis – there was an individual nett medal and better-ball nett medal competition to be decided.

After their captain's rousing motivational video on the first evening, Team BCX powered their way into a seven point lead after the first round and were quick to 'bait' their opponents at Saturday's function. SuperSport's captain Gideon Khobane's response was to simply stand up and say to his team: "We are the World of Champions – and we will be champions tomorrow evening".

His team took his words to heart and, after hauling in the seven-point deficit, proceeded to record a comfortable victory by 93.5 points to 87.5. And while Team SuperSport, Kevin Janse



Shakes Soyizwapi, Odwa Ndungane, Robbie Peterson, Akona Ndungane, Curwin Bosch, Hershelle Gibbs, Ashwell Prince and Vernon Philander.



Sunset over the Pearl Valley Club House.



Blitzboks Impi Visser, Ryan Oosthuizen, Werner Kok and Marius Schoeman.



Betterball champions, Nick Mallett and Victor Matfield.



Reuben Riffel and Ryk Neethling appearing on the Sunset Show.

van Rensburg, Victor Matfield and Nick Mallett were the winners off the course, the important winners were those who will ultimately benefit from the funds raised by this tournament, the Tournament of Champions.

LIV Villages was once again one of the beneficiaries, while this year additional beneficiaries were the Cyril Ramaphosa Foundation and the Val de Vie Foundation, that has done much uplifting work in the communities around the estate since its establishment.

Through pledges from players and sponsors, as well as through the charity auction conducted on the Saturday night, well over R1 million was raised over the course of the weekend, with the tournament total raised for charity since inception passing comfortably through the R25 million mark.

A stunning setting at Val de Vie in the Drakenstein Municipality, a superbly presented Jack Nicklaus Signature course at Pearl Valley, generous products for the players from an amazing array of sponsors, all contributed towards the creation of a world-class event and atmosphere around it.

After 16 years, South Africa's Tournament of Champions had found a way to raise the bar yet again.

**BCX**

**SuperSport**

**Shootout**

# 'I DON'T DO SUAVE'

The appointment of incoming Bidvest CEO Mpumi Madisa signals a new advancement in gender transformation in business.

BY MASHOKANE MAHLO

**N**OMPUMELELO 'MPUMI' Madisa, 39, announced the CEO-designate of Bidvest in South Africa, awaits the top job running the company in 2021.

What makes her appointment significant is she is the first black female CEO of a Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) Top 40 company.

Madisa tells FORBES AFRICA she knew early on, from the start of her professional career in her 20s, that she would score the top job in a corporate business.

"In about four years of working, I was already [in the] executive committee and one level below the board. It was very clear to me [then] that I could be the chief executive of a business."

Growing up, she encountered many adversities.

Born in her grandmother's house in Mohlakeng, west of Gauteng in South Africa, she says she exhibited leadership skills from an early age. Family and economic strife meant many challenges being raised by a single mother.

In the years Madisa was pursuing her graduate studies, her mother was unemployed and the uncertainty of getting her daughter through university loomed over like a dark cloud. At this point, Madisa had no choice but to apply for a student loan to realize her aspirations for a better future.

"When I was still very young, [my dad] used to spend a lot of time explaining to me what my name means," recalls Madisa.

"Nompumelelo means 'Mother of Success'. And from when I could read, he printed a

three-page definition of the word 'success' and put it on my mirror. He said to me, 'you must see and read this every day because you need to understand what you are meant to achieve'."

Madisa held various positions in the private sector and also had a short stint as Chief Director of Transformation in the provincial government of Gauteng.

Her new assignment at Bidvest has been lauded not only by business but also the South African presidency.

President Cyril Ramaphosa said: "The emergence of Mpumi Madisa as Chief Executive of a major corporation in our economy is a significant personal achievement that also signifies a new advance in gender transformation in business."

Corporate South Africa continues to be underrepresented by women in executive positions; it's a reality reflected on the JSE.

In 2018, executive recruitment company, Jack Hammer, published its *Executive Report Volume 5* which stated that only 2.5% of the CEOs on the JSE Top 40 were women. In pure nominal terms, that is one woman: Maria Ramos, who has subsequently stepped down as CEO of Barclays Africa Group early 2019. To this effect, that number, both nominally and percentage-wise, has reduced to zero. Madisa will only occupy the corner office in 2021.

"One of the things that Bidvest is about is homegrown leadership," says Madisa, who has spent 12 years with the group. "Probably about 95% of our CEOs and board executive directors have come from within."

She is a stellar example that with inclusive

growth, a woman who grew up in the dusty streets of a South African township can become the leader of a conglomerate with a market capitalization of around R67 billion (\$4.5 billion).

Integral to Madisa's success, she says, are three key principles she applies to whichever position she steps into.

"[Firstly], I don't do suave and the gift of the gab. I problem-solve... I interrogate the numbers and the data. I interpret the data and therefore, [suggest] 'this is what we need to do.'"

Her second principle is to put results on the table and quickly add value.

"The corporate space does not give you a long rope and long lead time to prove you can add value."

And equally, her final approach is to leverage her team. "The higher you go in your organization, the less you can do yourself. Your ability to influence and work through the people that you have to achieve your ultimate goal is very important," she adds. The efficacy of her approach to her work was demonstrated when she was previously appointed the Sales Director at Bidvest and almost doubled the sales performance from 50% behind the target to 95%, within her first six months. Accordingly, when the Bidvest Limited board was looking to appoint someone who would take on the reins; someone who understands the group, its culture, vision and strategy; its seven operating divisions and take the company forward; Madisa was decisively the individual they chose. **F**

Mpumi Madisa

# BURGLAR WATCH

The escalating safety and security issues in Nigeria raised the alarm for this innovative entrepreneur.

BY PEACE HYDE

**T**ODAY, ORGANIZATIONS NOT only face escalating risks but also the certitude that they will face a security breach at any time, if proper precautions are not taken. Such was the case for Paul Ajibulu when his office premises were ransacked by thugs in Adeola Odeku, Victoria Island, Lagos.

“We had just got our office fully furnished with MacBook computers and the whole works. When we came in the next day, we found the locks broken and all the office equipment had been looted. I lost about \$20,000 in all that day and that set our business back for a couple of months,” says Ajibulu.

To solve his problems, he reached out to Extreme Mutual Technique, an automated digital systems solution and renewable energy service provider.

The company says it boasts top-tier clients such as MTN, the Embassy of Sierra Leone, South African Breweries, and Africa Finance Corporation, amongst many others.

Akpobome Ojoboh, its founder and Managing Director, is adamant his systems are a must-have for every organization in Nigeria.

“We initially started the business called Extreme Surveillance Systems limited. Coming from my previous background, we decided to focus on CCTV and digital security. Considering the fact that Nigeria was being terrorized by security mishaps, we decided to [resolve] that,” says Ojoboh.

Safety and security have never been discussed in Nigeria as they are now. Threats are from everywhere, and at all places. Routine security checking at offices and shopping mall entrances has become the norm. The idea of preventing crime is an appealing twist in today’s times and although it’s comforting for many to imagine a competent police officer monitoring every camera in Lagos, the question remains whether CCTV systems really do

prevent crimes from happening or do they merely help in nabbing a criminal once a crime has occurred.

In a city like Lagos where you have constant disruptions to power, the long-term success of these systems presented significant hurdles for Ojoboh in the early days.

“There are so many limitations to digital security vis-à-vis the lack of a proper database that even when you have [identified] the culprits, you cannot find them. Furthermore, there were limitations to how people took ownership of their equipment because there was [often] no power. So, you put a system and people say ‘what if there is no power?’”

To combat these challenges, Ojoboh decided to provide another solution, by moving into the world of inverters.

“Then again, these inverters run down when there is no power to charge them so we went into renewable energy called solar to back up our inverters and digital solutions. That is when we changed the business to Extreme Mutual Technique Limited,” says Ojoboh.

Security is one of the largest businesses in the world, according to Ojoboh.

He has seen an increase in more families opting for peace of mind by having big brother watching over their loved ones whenever they cannot be with them.

“When I first became a mum, I would always worry incessantly about my daughter left alone at home with my nanny. Then, we started noticing strange marks on my daughter and I had heard about people mistreating children they cared for but I never thought it would happen to me. I reached out to a security company to install a camera in the house and lo and behold, I saw the nanny hitting my daughter. My whole world crumbled,” says Rebecca Gyan, a grocery store owner in Accra.

“You have to be prepared because if you are not, then you almost cannot stop any



Akpobome Ojoboh

security breach. It helps you to know some proactive measures to protect yourself. If you have a CCTV system and you notice there is a particular group of people visiting your building, you will be able to notice and react,” says Ojoboh.

As organizations become familiar with probable threats and vulnerabilities, they will be able to establish both preventive measures and responsive systems, to decrease the likelihood of intruders and attacks.

Since starting out in 2007, Ojoboh has grown the team to a 40-member business spread across Lagos and Abuja. The company has also moved into IT and engineering services in the areas of energy infrastructure, home automation, fire safety and digital security solutions.

With power still an issue in Nigeria, Ojoboh sees the future of his business in the area of renewable energy to power his systems to provide that all-important peace of mind to his clients. **F**



# THE MOVIE BUFF WITH A HAPPY ENDING IN BUSINESS

Kene Okwuosa continues to make profit selling the immersive cinema experience across movie halls in Nigeria.

BY PEACE HYDE

**I**F TRAILERS OF SIMON KINBERG'S upcoming *X-Men: Dark Phoenix* have whetted your appetite for more action-packed cinema, you could take your pick from the likes of *Hobbs & Shaw*, *John Wick 3: Parabellum* or *Avengers: End game*. But as any film buff would tell you, watching these adrenaline rushes on DVD or TV is no match for a full-throttle cinema experience.

Kene Okwuosa is bullish about letting Nigeria's 190 million population experience the thrilling excitement of the celluloid world. Using the theater to extract a sizeable profit from the Nigerian culture of socializing and communal engagement, his Filmhouse Cinemas has grown from just three screens to multiple locations across the country.

As part of the company's strategic expansion plans, Okwuosa signed a pioneer deal to bring IMAX, the world's most immersive cinematic experience, to West Africa in 2016. In doing so,

Filmhouse has flipped a switch not just to beat competition from other local cinema chains, but also become one of the fastest-growing IMAX businesses in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Quite a feat considering Okwuosa's first stint at the cinema business did not have a happy ending.

The year was 2008 and Okwuosa and his partner at the time, also named Kene, were desperately looking for greener pastures beyond the borders of the United Kingdom (UK), where they were both employed as assistant general manager and general manager respectively at Odeon Cinemas.

"I had a conversation with Kene on the first of December 2008 and he was saying there is an opportunity with a friend of his who was an investor in Nigeria and we could go back, set up a company and create a great product in Nigeria. I resigned from my job on the second of December, I saw my family on the third of December and I caught a flight on the fourth of December after not being back in Nigeria for 11 years," says Okwuosa.

And their voyage back home was favored by lady luck. A South African company at the time was exiting the Nigerian market and their assets were up for grabs. With the help of their investor, the pair bought up the assets and just like that, Genesis Deluxe Cinemas was born. It was a magical moment in the lives of the newly-minted entrepreneurs.

With three chains of Genesis Cinemas under their belt, the pair were ready to reap the profits of their entrepreneurial pursuits until everything went belly up.

"A year later, that deal went so bad we had to exit. Myself and Kene exited the company to our dismay. The private investor owned most of the business and there were issues between the investor and my partner relating to a slight misalignment of the company. We were torn between either staying in Lagos or going back to the UK. We decided to stay and tug it out," says Okwuosa.

The pair had to downsize from the guest house they were staying in to a

smaller flat and survived on noodles, while they hatched their next plan. They turned their living room into an office and went back to the drawing board.

Okwuosa believed there was still a market in the cinema theater business and he was not wrong. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Nigerian film industry is globally recognized as the second-largest film producer in the world. Total cinema revenue is set to reach \$22 million in 2021, rising at 8.6% CAGR over the forecast period. The cinema industry is one of the priority sectors identified in the economic recovery growth plan of the federal government of Nigeria with a planned \$1 billion in export revenue



**WE DIDN'T KNOW ANYBODY AND WE ARE NOT SONS OF RICH MEN.**

by 2020. Furthermore, the National Film and Video Censors Board estimates the Nigerian movie industry needs at least 774 cinemas across the country for it to tackle the menace of piracy.

"So, for two years, I was literally waking up and going to every single office trying to pitch and raise money. We didn't know anybody and we are not sons of rich men, we had already failed with Genesis, we had no assets or collateral. We were literally telling people we were going to modernize Nigeria's entertainment scene and everybody was looking at us like we were crazy."

In 2009, the Intervention Funds, created by then president Goodluck Jonathan to boost the Nigerian creative industry, would prove to be the lifeline Okwuosa and his partner so badly needed.

"I am proud to say we were the very first to access that fund in 2012, which was about N200 million at the time which,

when you look back is not that much but considering the exchange rate, it was over \$1 million. It was enough to help us kickstart Filmhouse. We had nothing, so that particular facility was largely uncollateralized," says Okwuosa.

The fund took a bet on Okuwosa and his partner and it paid off. The loan was used to open their first three-screen cinema in Surulere, Lagos.

"It had a slow start but ultimately grew to be one of the biggest locations in the country and that organic growth led us to open two more cinemas prior to our second round of investors, which was private equity money from African Capital Alliance."

The investment helped Okwuosa to scale to 10 operational locations across six states. The original vision when Okwuosa started Filmhouse was to be the biggest and best cinema and create an amazing space where people could escape into a different world.

Two years after, the company set up the production and distribution part of the business.

Filmhouse now represents about 50% of tickets sold in Nigerian cinemas, according to Okwuosa. With just a dream to conquer the Nigerian market, today, Filmhouse has a vision to become a media entertainment company.

In addition to IMAX, the company represents other international brands like Warner Bros and Lionsgate. With the institutional investment, Okwuosa has strengthened his core team, which no longer includes his former partner, as well as providing the company the impetus to scale with the right mind and right trajectory.

With a GDP of \$375 billion making the Nigerian economy the 30th largest economy in the world, Okwuosa believes there is still a big chunk of money to be made from the entertainment and media space.

"I think we haven't even scratched the surface of this industry and we want to position ourselves at the forefront of Nigerian entertainment." 

# HEARTH AND *Soul*

Yolanda Nomoyi and Mathapelo Montsho



Yolanda Nomoyi and Mathapelo Montsho's catering company is proving that corporate South Africa has a genuine appetite for home-cooked food served with soul.

BY MOTLABANA MONNAKGOTLA

**T**HEY WERE TWO PEOPLE leading completely different lives until that one day at a social gathering when food brought them together.

Mathapelo Montsho and Yolanda Nomoyi met through a mutual friend and they both had common culinary passions.

Soon, they together put their skills, contacts and experience to good use, to found Why Cook, a catering company, in 2015, with one founder specializing in meat and the other in vegetarian food, preparing dishes from their home-kitchens for their respective clients.

Business picked up and soon, they were cooking together for big corporates, from Montsho's single garage at her residence in Midrand in north Johannesburg.

Success was brewing for Why Cook, and from the garage, the eager entrepreneurs moved the business into the house and into a neighbor's vacant garage they used as a storage facility.

The co-founders had no formal culinary background and never aspired to be chefs but embraced the fact that people needed good, healthy home-cooked food, which was their specialty.

"It's what people always say about our food; it's very homely and you cook from the heart and soul. [For example], we use our grandmothers' recipes to make spinach because we always struggled with it and surprisingly, ours taste better than what the chefs make [in five-star hotels]," they concur.

Obviously, demand came from quarters and in numbers they didn't expect. Nomoyi adds: "We bagged a big order from Knorr; a food and beverage brand, and we had to get assistance. We employed four people to help with this particular order, then another order from ACSA (Airports Company South Africa), to cater for up to 100 people a day because they didn't have a canteen.

We were catering for two companies at the same time."

Their humble kitchens couldn't handle the pace at which the business was growing. The pair soon won a bid to cater for the prestigious ACSA Feather Awards. That was their biggest event and a breakthrough into more corporate opportunities.

In the short time that they worked as a tag team, they closed the year with a turnover of over a million rand, and they worked ridiculous hours – early mornings and late nights.



**WHEN YOU DON'T  
KNOW WHAT  
YOU'RE DOING,  
IT'S DIFFICULT  
FOR STAFF TO BE  
COMMITTED.**

– YOLANDA NOMOYI

With their earnings, Montsho and Nomoyi moved to bigger premises.

"Now that we got money, [we said] 'let's actually get a decent space at the Riversands Incubation Hub' [subsidized for small and medium enterprises]. We enquired and they were not responding to our calls and emails, but finally agreed to meet us. They doubted us and we gave them a deposit," Montsho says.

The two moved to a 150sqm space in Fourways, in upmarket Johannesburg, a week later in early 2016.

All they had were two gas stoves, pots and pans, and a growing client base. With the profit they made at the ACSA Feather Awards, they bought

an industrial oven, a fridge and more equipment.

"We didn't realize how much all this costs. We bought the fridge and thought it was going to come in a truck, but it came as panels, we had to pay another R20,000 (\$1,345) to get it assembled after buying it for R50,000 (\$3,362). So we ended up spending more than R100,000 (\$6,725) for equipment," says Montsho.


Overall, they have spent around R400,000 (\$26,900) and say they are nowhere near being fully-equipped. But Lady Luck has been with them. After approaching an events and public relations company to do work with them, they were offered a stove as part of a corporate social investment project.

Today, Why Cook, employs seven permanent staff and 15 temporary staff, although some of the original team members have left.

"I also think that when you don't know what you're doing, it's difficult for staff to be committed. So now that we are getting more confident, growing and instilling certain processes, when an environment is conducive for people to stay, people will do so. Now, four years later, our turnover is R6 million (\$403,000)," says Nomoyi.

Why Cook still caters for major corporates such as ACSA and L'Oréal in South Africa and will soon be expanding its business to other parts of the country.

In 2019, the pair walked away with the Rocket Fuel Award, recognizing the business that has shown the highest sustained income growth over the program period in the SAB Foundation Tholoana Enterprise Programme Awards ceremony.

They are testimony that homely food and hard work can be great ingredients for success. 

# \$30,000 TO LOOK LIKE KIM KARDASHIAN?

The influence of social media and the quest for curvier bodies. Cosmetic surgeries are all the rage in West Africa, but in some cases, have also gone horribly wrong.

BY PEACE HYDE

**W**HEN JENNIFER (*NAME changed to protect identity*) made the decision to go under the knife for cosmetic surgery, she never thought her quest for perfection would lead to death.

She had elected to go in for a Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) and spent months in preparation, researching doctors, reading reviews and watching influencer videos on *YouTube*.

She had the option of flying to Dubai for the procedure which would set her back by about \$20,000 for a round trip, or alternatively, have it done in Lagos. Her local option was a new plastic surgery practice that promised competent doctors from the United States (US), full discretion and unbeatable value. Jennifer was offered a tummy tuck, back-lift and BBL, which would have typically cost \$9,000, for free. All she had to do was post the new surgery on Instagram.

“We were very close, we had such a strong bond, everybody used to say we were twins. We shared everything. She was smart so we trusted that she knew what she was doing and although I was uncomfortable, I could understand the

reasons why she wanted to go under the knife,” recalls Opeyemi, Jennifer’s sister.

Jennifer was gradually gaining popularity as a social media influencer with over 40,000 Instagram followers. She had just begun a campaign for a swimwear brand that was paying her \$200 per post on her Instagram page. The new posts began to go viral encouraging engagement on her page.

“If you are an influencer, you know just how important it is to go viral. One viral video or image could mean a boost in your social media following and that means more opportunities to make money. Jennifer already had a nice body, but the pressure of growing her account and social media influence got the better of her,” says Opeyemi.

On a warm Friday afternoon, Opeyemi drove her sister to the clinic in upmarket Victoria Island, Lagos. The reception was welcoming with carefully-curated before-and-after images on the walls of women who had been happy clients.

On the center table, were glossy magazines





## JENNIFER ALREADY HAD A NICE BODY, BUT THE PRESSURE OF GROWING HER ACCOUNT AND SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE GOT THE BETTER OF HER.

featuring Caucasian models with perfect photo-shopped bodies. The television played a looped video with images of Nicki Minaj, Kim Kardashian, Jennifer Lopez and other iconic images from pop culture.

At the reception, were credentials from the American Surgical Association along with a framed article on the surgeon. After waiting with her sister for a few minutes, Jennifer was taken to the back of the building to prepare for her surgery.

“Everything seemed fine. The doctor was a Nigerian who had lived in the US for 40 years and had a certificate claiming to be a board-certified surgeon from the US. There really was no cause for alarm because we had taken about a year to prepare for this. So, what could go wrong?”

The surgery took six hours and after about an extra hour, Opeyemi was taken to the back-room where her sister was recovering. She was told all went well and the surgery was a success.

Five days later, Jennifer was back on her feet and well on her way to making a full recovery.

“We were coming back home when she passed out at the door. I helped her up into the living room. Jen told me she needed painkillers as she was getting very sharp pains in her heart area. I ran into the bedroom to grab the tablets and the last thing I heard from Jennifer was a piercing scream before she fell on the couch. By the time we reached the hospital, she was gone,” says Opeyemi.

It was a surgery gone horribly wrong. The American Society of Plastic

Surgeons specifies BBL as one of the most dangerous cosmetic procedures with one in 3,000 resulting in death. Yet, its popularity is growing.

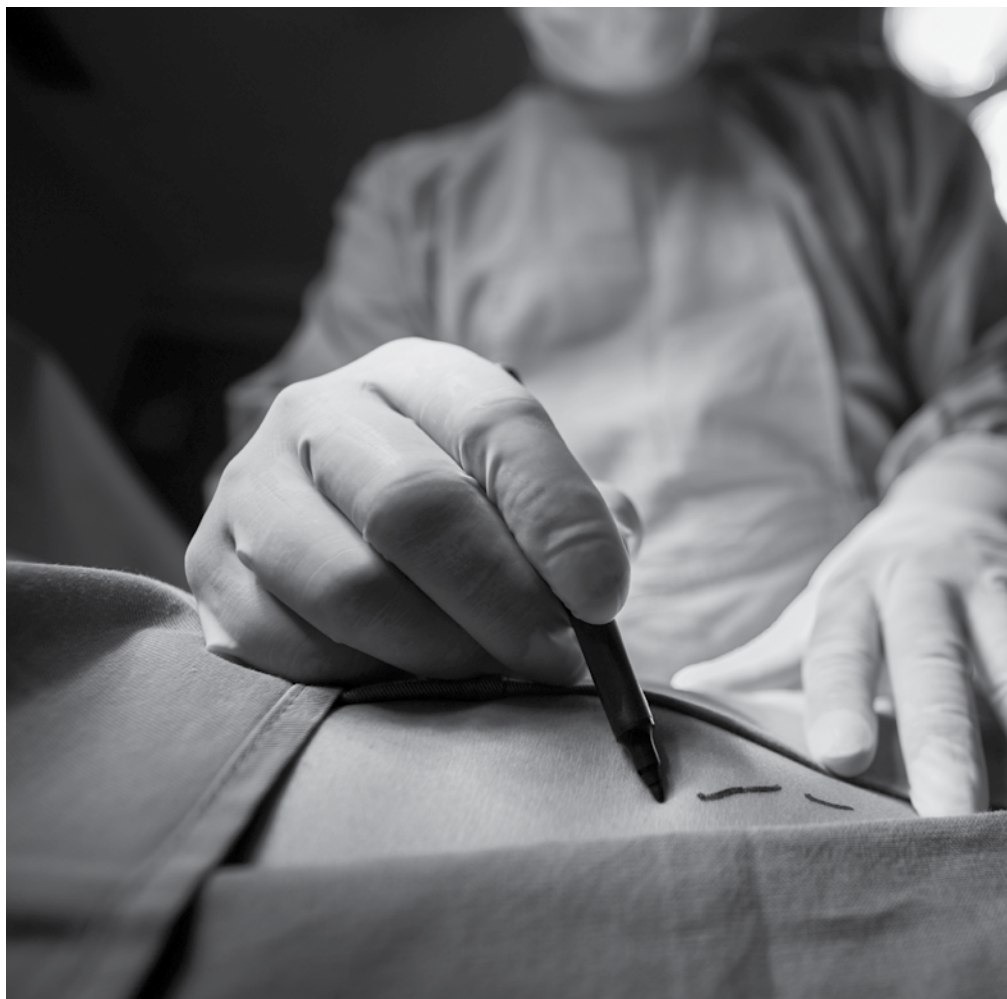
“Fat that’s injected too deep can enter your circulatory system, possibly leading to pulmonary embolism. The risks with BBL are unacceptably high and I always advise young women of today to stay away from this procedure,” says Dr Michael Hayman, a medical practitioner in Accra, Ghana.

The BBL is a two-step process. Known as a natural buttock augmentation procedure using fat cells harvested from one area of the body and transferred to the butt, BBL’s popularity in Africa is

steeped in the African culture of curvier is sexier, according to Jimmy Ojo, a fitness instructor in Lagos.

“I get women who come to me every day asking for a workout routine that will guarantee a smaller waistline and big butt. They don’t want to lose any weight from the butt because they believe that is what makes them beautiful and that is because our society consistently promotes curvy girls as sexy. That is the in-thing right now,” says Ojo.

“We make sure everybody who wants to undergo plastic surgery in our center has the right mindset. I never carry out a procedure on anyone who I feel is a risk to themselves. The procedure involves using



liposuction to remove fat from selected areas of your body. Through this state-of-the-art technique, we naturally and strategically inject fat into the buttocks. This results in a youthful, fuller and lifted natural buttocks without the use of implants,” says Dr Stanley Okoro, an Atlanta-based cosmetic surgeon.

Social media filters are popular among all generations, while filters on apps like Snapchat and Facetune allow you to transform into the best version of yourself, digitally. You can opt for body enhancements – from a smaller waistline, fuller hips to bigger breasts – until you see the perfect image of yourself. That’s when reality suddenly does not seem so appealing anymore.

“I get clients who bring in Snapchat filters into consultations and ask me to replicate exactly what they see in the filter,” says Dr Preeyush Ramaswamy, a cosmetic surgeon based in Dubai.

Over the past year, he has seen an uptick in clients from Nigeria and Ghana flying out to Dubai for anything from BBLs to facial injections.

“By far, our most popular procedure is the BBL. This year alone, we have carried out about 1,000 procedures and [all our customers have been happy]. We also offer injectables for any area of the face including chin, jawline, mouth lines, cheeks, nose, lips etc. Our procedures cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$30,000 depending on what you are getting done,” says Ramaswamy.

Perhaps Nigeria’s most high-profile case of death by plastic surgery was when the wife of former President, Olusegun Obasanjo, succumbed to a botched tummy tuck procedure in Spain.

But that was in 2005, before the craze of social media took over.

“Social media is so powerful. It has the ability to mess with our heads. Every day, we are bombarded with images of beautiful black women with perfect bodies and these images basically tell the world that this is what is beautiful and a lot of young girls are falling for it. Brands

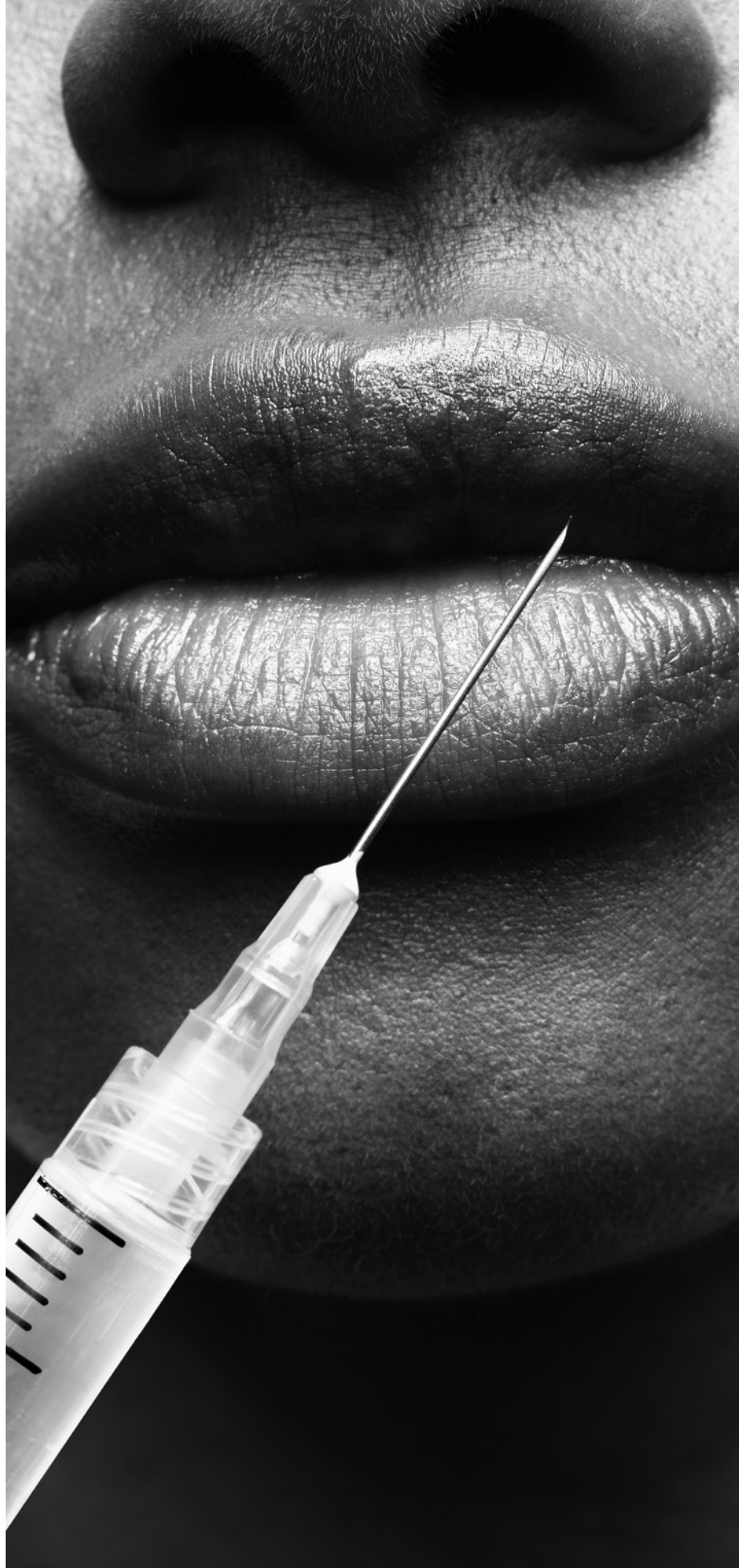


Photo by Thomas Barwick via Getty Images; Photo by Stefanie Keenan/Getty Images for ABA; Photo by Brauns via Getty Images; Photo by Michael Jung via Getty Images



**THE RISKS WITH BBL ARE UNACCEPTABLY HIGH AND I ALWAYS ADVISE YOUNG WOMEN OF TODAY TO STAY AWAY FROM THIS PROCEDURE.**

also reward those influencers with high numbers with lucrative deals to promote their products,” says Opeyemi.

Micro-influencers, those influencers with numbers anywhere between 10,000 and 500,000 followers on social media, are predicted to have more influence than celebrities, according to a recent report by Influencer Marketing Hub. Brands are increasingly looking for engagement instead of eyeballs. These brands and marketers are now focusing on interaction between influencers and their audiences and using native ads and stories to seamlessly plug their products to unsuspecting consumers. In the wake of this new trend, those influencers with

very high engagement with their fan bases are receiving the biggest cheques.

“We pay influencers anywhere from \$200 to \$5,000 per post depending on the number of followers and the level of engagement. There is no such thing as bad news, the most important thing is to get audiences engaged with your content. As a result, when people see a Kim Kardashian who has 140 million followers and get up to \$500,000 per post, the natural question is ‘how do I get to that level’. Next, you will want to look like her, dress like her and do everything she did to get to where she is and that is what most of these people going under the knife are motivated by,” says Kojo Asamoah, a PR



consultant based in Lagos.

“I became very analytical with my posts to drive engagements. I started noticing which posts worked and which ones didn’t. As a beauty influencer, you understand the power of having a viral moment and that is the moment where you need to make the most out of it,” says Jackie Aina, a beauty influencer based in the US.

With tags like #glowup and #slay, the best digital image can be conjured up in an instant. In a recent report by the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, 72% of facial plastic surgeons saw an increase in cosmetic surgery or injectables in patients under the age of 30 in 2018.

“Looking like some of your favorite celebrities is now simply a knife or injection away. And if brands continue to gain significant ROI from social media and influencers, then more and more millennials in Africa will be looking to capitalize on this trend to make ends meet,” adds Asamoah.

But the question remains, is getting a perkier butt worth the price of your life?

“BBL is basically a blind procedure. There is a risk that you could injure a vessel and pump milliliters and milliliters in this vessel and cause damage which could hit the lungs or the heart and you die within seconds of a heart attack. This is why this procedure in particular is dangerous,” says Ramaswamy.

Africa is being swept by a craze for cosmetic surgeries, with about 14 million people spending anywhere between \$3,800 to \$6,000 per visit and even traveling abroad looking for medical treatment with a beach holiday, according to a 2017 FORBES AFRICA story.

It’s a market estimated to be worth between \$45 billion and \$72 billion, and South Africa is sitting at the top table, according to Patients Beyond Borders, a US-based firm that has given medical tourism advice for a decade. The practice is becoming more and more popular within both the wealthy and



not-so-wealthy.

“South Africa is a [developing] country with first world infrastructure in hospitals and roads, not to mention amazing tourist hotspots. When you consider that the rand is also a lot cheaper than the dollar, South Africa offers the best value for money for plastic surgery in Africa,” says Asamoah.

#### PROFIT AND PAIN

For many, the pain of losing a loved one is unfathomable. Jennifer was only 26 years old when she passed away.

“Jennifer didn’t need the surgery. I told her she did not have to do it but she had a mind of her own and she felt it would help her as an influencer. I think definitely social media had a big role to play in her decision to have plastic surgery. More and more girls are seeing unrealistic images of beauty in Africa and African women are beginning to look like caricatures

of themselves,” says Stephen, Jennifer’s fiancé.

New developments in technology and communication have forced businesses to rethink their current marketing strategies. In the past, we have seen digital go through an explosive growth and with it, traditional marketing has been removed from the forefront of most campaigns.

As social media continues to dominate the world of marketing, the need for perfection, high follower numbers and engagement is at an all-time high and millennials keen to reap the rewards of this new world are looking at cosmetic surgery as one of the answers to a perfect life.

Being curvaceous is trendy right now and the Kardashian effect is gaining in popularity. BBL may be the current craze, but these are three alphabets that could spell life, or death. **F**

# Forbes CEO

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# TECH STARTUPS WILL SUPPORT AFRICA'S GROWTH



BY: RORY MOORE, INNOVATION LEAD  
AND LIQUID STUDIO DIRECTOR AT  
ACCENTURE, AFRICA

## COLLABORATION CAN IGNITE PROGRESS SUCCESS

Across the African continent, more technology startups are emerging. They have an important role to play. They bring new thinking and new solutions that have the potential to address many of Africa's endemic challenges—from financial inclusion to e-health and market access—solving critical challenges for business, government and civil society, and, importantly, stimulating economic growth. How can Africa realise this potential?

Innovation is an engine for growth—for companies and economies. Collaboration accelerates innovation.

Collaboration between startups

and large, established organisations can increase the reach and impact of innovation, which increasingly correlates with higher economic performance at enterprise and economy-wide levels. By leveraging the power of ecosystems and open innovation, African economies can accelerate progress, unlocking Africa's abundance for all.

## THE OPEN INNOVATION IMPERATIVE

Organisations across the world are in the midst of a digital revolution that is sweeping away old processes and business models. In the face of rapid change, the only option is to adapt at pace. This has eradicated traditional innovation approaches. In its place vast new ecosystems of partners from different industries and geographies are emerging to create new solutions that deliver exponentially more value to digital customers.

In Africa, businesses are in the throes of transformation with many sectors just starting out on this journey. Encumbered by legacy systems, infrastructure and business models, these organisations must confront a complex and shifting mix of opportunities and risks. The challenges include meeting heightened customer expectations and the demands of a dynamically changing market, and competing with born-digital competitors.

To do this they must seek new partners and skills that can bring more agility to their organisations and research and development (R&D) operations, disrupt existing business models, provide access to adjacent markets, and help them develop a more entrepreneurial internal mindset.

## STARTUPS TOO FACE MAJOR CHALLENGES

In Africa's fragmented and disconnected

innovation ecosystem, tech visionaries and innovators are pushing the boundaries with technologies like AI, blockchain and analytics. These solutions have the power to create their own markets or disrupt existing industries, but startups are struggling to find the resources, expertise and support they need to launch, grow and scale their offerings.

Open innovation using collaborative, multi-party, ecosystem-wide innovation that delivers exponentially more value, faster could drive progress across the African continent. It sets the stage for collaboration between established businesses and innovative startups.

Open innovation can provide:

- Startups with the support they need to grow and succeed,
- Incumbents with the technology and digital offerings they need to meet the demands of digital customers and partners, and
- Africa's people with access to products and services that can improve lives and lifestyles.

Open Innovation and the creation of collaborative digital ecosystems can help nurture, protect, incubate and commercialise innovation to bring about an uptick in Africa's economic growth and a step change in problem resolution. Consider the value that companies like Pargo, MPost and SpacePointe bring.

## STARTUPS DRIVING CHANGE

In Africa, it can be difficult to deliver goods to places like informal settlements and rural areas. Pargo has established over 2,000 pick-up points in retail stores for client deliveries. MPost converts phone numbers into formal postal addresses, helping to reduce the challenge of 'communal addresses' in Africa. SpacePointe provides a payments platform

that is device agnostic, works offline and enables payment collection from the informal sector even in the most rural areas. This is helping to drive adoption of electronic payments for and by the informal sector.

Every one of these solutions help solve a challenge that large companies—retailers, banks and government postal services—have not been able to do on their own. They drive inclusivity and bring more people into the economy. Their offerings give retailers and large corporates faster access to cheaper and more nimble technologies that are market validated. At the same time, startups that are supported by larger businesses have a greater opportunity to succeed.

The benefits large companies can provide include funding, market access, technical expertise, business knowledge, access to facilities and talent.

The buy-in Pargo receives from large retailers, as well as e-tailers, is critical to its growth. But there are also specific areas of expertise and experience that large companies can provide to startups. Fintech startups, for example, must comply with the same regulations that established institutions have been dealing with for years, making collaboration with incumbents beneficial in many ways.

The complementary capabilities, collaborative mindset, domain expertise, customer relationships and data that ecosystem partners offer can help bring new market plays to fruition.

### DEEPER COLLABORATION DRIVES VALUE

In an increasingly digital and connected world, both startups and large companies are exploring the value that can be created by closer and deeper collaboration.

Ecosystem innovation, the most mature form of open innovation, is the ultimate goal.

Ecosystem innovation is innovation that occurs among a broader ecosystem of collaborators working on an equal footing. It enables enterprises to look beyond their four walls to bring in ideas more quickly, enhance their innovation programmes, and also create shared value at the intersection of corporate performance and society to solve big or common problems.

## THE POWER OF ECOSYSTEMS

**AN ECOSYSTEM IS THE NETWORK OF CROSS-INDUSTRY PLAYERS WHO WORK TOGETHER TO DEFINE, BUILD AND EXECUTE MARKET-CREATING CUSTOMER AND CONSUMER SOLUTIONS. AN ECOSYSTEM IS DEFINED BY THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF POTENTIAL COLLABORATION AMONG A SET OF PLAYERS: EACH CAN DELIVER A PIECE OF THE CONSUMER SOLUTION, OR CONTRIBUTE A NECESSARY CAPABILITY. THE POWER OF THE ECOSYSTEM IS THAT NO SINGLE PLAYER NEED OWN OR OPERATE ALL COMPONENTS OF THE SOLUTION, AND THAT THE VALUE THE ECOSYSTEM GENERATES IS LARGER THAN THE COMBINED VALUE EACH OF THE PLAYERS COULD CONTRIBUTE INDIVIDUALLY.**

### WAY FORWARD – HARNESS THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Over the last decade, the digital economy has been driven and dominated by technology startups. The next decade will see the awakening of an entrepreneurial spirit among incumbent industry leaders as they strive to regain competitive advantage, disrupt their own markets or invent new ones. To do so, they will need to change the way they innovate—they need to shift past traditional small-scale and self-serving collaboration with innovators to harness the power of digital collaboration across a broader ecosystem.

### ACTIONS FOR LARGE COMPANIES

- **Embrace collaboration as a long term strategy.** With senior management vision, support and empowerment, frontline executives will need to dedicate resources inside the business to support external collaboration as an integral strategy.
- **Help develop the startup supply chain.** Buying directly from startups and/or providing them with indirect access to the enterprise supply chain can go a long way toward helping these small businesses to scale.
- **Provide institutional support.** Apart from investing in startups and providing financial assistance, large companies can provide specialised mentoring

programmes related to business strategy, business plan development, go-to-market strategy and other guidance to new entrepreneurs.

### ACTIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURS

- **Align to the market.** Companies assign high importance to startups' alignment to their business priorities. It is important for entrepreneurs to recognise the specific needs and interests of large companies to effectively collaborate with them.
- **Time it well.** Many large companies and investors are not looking to support startups at the ideation or seed stage. Founders need to pitch to the right source of finance suitable to their startup's development stage.
- **Adopt mentors and onboard specialists.** Startups may lack the skills and experience, processes and business structures to manage the growth phase of their venture. It is important, therefore, to bring in professional management, as well as experienced mentors from large companies and venture capital boards.

### ACTIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS

- **Develop co-financing models.** Government funding, paired with private sponsorship, has a strong positive impact on the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

- **Incentivise large companies to collaborate with startups.** Collaboration between large and small companies is developing in all forms—corporate venturing, private sector incubation programmes, and joint and ecosystem innovation. Specific government policies, such as tax rebates can support collaboration.
- **Create collaboration networks.** Collaboration between incubators in different locations or with a different industry focus is critical to nurturing cross-disciplinary talent, particularly in places where multidisciplinary universities are missing.
- **Develop digital infrastructure.** Digital migration and development of digital infrastructure should be prioritised.
- **Support skills development.** A comprehensive innovation policy focused on human capital development is the need of the hour.

#### ACTIONS FOR BRIDGEMAKERS

Bridgemakers constitute a group of public and private sector organisations, including government agencies, R&D centres, universities, venture capitalists and service providers that can create open innovation environments. Accenture, for example, has a number of initiatives to stimulate and accelerate startup growth in Africa, and to create networks and drive collaboration between ecosystem stakeholders.

- **Promote role models.** Successful entrepreneurs are often effective at investing in, and mentoring next-generation startups. By promoting past entrepreneurial successes, they can build the confidence of startup founders and young potential entrepreneurs.
- **Build and connect with mentors.** Bridgemakers can provide the physical spaces to allow entrepreneurs and mentors to mingle.
- **Connect with specialised clusters.** Connecting new entrepreneurs with a specialised global ecosystem or clusters can enhance their innovation capabilities and create a positive effect on their confidence and competitiveness. These clusters can provide entrepreneurs with access to funding, markets, talent, and support systems, like business guidance and back office support.

#### AFRICAN STARTUPS TO WATCH

Startups will be vital to Africa's growth. To give market players insight into the opportunities, Accenture facilitated a competition for startups that was adjudicated by ecosystem judges. These judges identified a number of African startups to watch. The startups have proven solutions that are adding considerable value to consumers and to businesses. Around them, new ecosystems are forming.



#### MPOST - TRANSFORMING POSTAL SERVICES IN AFRICA

MPost stands for Mobile Post Office. The company converts phone numbers into formal postal addresses and notifies users whenever they receive goods. This helps eliminate the challenge of 'communal addresses' in Africa, the result of postal structures that are unable to accommodate millions of addresses. MPost works on smartphones as well as the older generation feature phones that are common across Africa. The solution started on the USSD platform and is now available on Web, Android and iOS platforms. The service is active in Kenya and plans to expand into Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Botswana. [www.mpost.co.ke](http://www.mpost.co.ke)



#### HEARX GROUP - AFFORDABLE HEARING HEALTH

hearX Group (Pty) Ltd provides affordable access to hearing care using smart digital solutions. It has gone to market with several products since its launch of hearScreen, a mobile health application for clinically valid, rapid low-cost hearing screening. hearKiosk is a self-test kiosk used in pharmacies and waiting areas while mHealth is an integrated cloud and app solution that manages patient, facility and test data seamlessly. hearX has had more than 600 000 tests completed across 38 countries on five continents. Its solutions provide a new way to overcome traditional barriers to healthy hearing. [www.hearxgroup.com](http://www.hearxgroup.com)



#### PARGO - LOGISTICS FOR AFRICA DELIVERY

Pargo is a multi-channel logistics platform that helps retailers solve the challenges of last-mile deliveries. In Africa, it can be difficult to deliver goods to places like informal settlements, rural areas and high security estates. Pargo has established over 2,000 pick-up points in retail stores for client deliveries. It has been operating in the South African market for the last four years. It works with The Foschini Group, Cape Union Mart, Clicks, FNB, African Bank and more. Pargo has recently expanded to Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini. <https://pargo.co.za/>



#### HOOZA

Hooza is a media powerhouse specialising in digital broadcast and communication. Using mobile platforms, it provides alternative access to information and content. It broadcasts on-demand text, voice and video short programmes (infotainment, education, music, entertainment and faith-based content) in partnerships with leading international mobile operators and platform developers. The app makes them accessible to the majority of mobile users in Africa via an interactive platform accessible to all mobile phone users in Africa in the language of their choice. Hooza is based in Rwanda and is expanding its business on the continent. [www.hooza.rw](http://www.hooza.rw)



#### HOUSEME

HouseME is an online rental disruptor that takes the hassle, cost and risk out of managing long-term rentals. It allows landlords to list their properties digitally, vets prospective tenants and shows them verified properties. HouseME can help landlords collect rentals and manage properties. It offers a rental guarantee to its users, assisting landlords with comprehensive risk cover. HouseME currently serves more than 22,000 users. [www.house.me](http://www.house.me)

## SPACEPOINTE®

### SPACEPOINTE – ELECTRONIC PAYMENT FOR SMMES, ANYWHERE

SpacePointe is a financial technology company dedicated to transforming the payment experience for micro, small and medium business owners. The SpacePointe payments platform is driving adoption of electronic payments for and by the informal sector. It is device agnostic, works offline and enables payment collection from the informal sector even in the most rural areas. PointePay is a point of sale application for merchants that includes unique features tailored for African users (e.g., it uses phone numbers for validation and audio navigation in multiple languages). Its cloud-based payments platform is being leveraged by governments in Africa for tax revenue collection. The SpacePointe platform has launched in West Africa and North America, with planned launches in APAC and Latin American regions.

[spacepointe.com](http://spacepointe.com)



### COWTRIBE TECHNOLOGY

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# FOOTBALL, BEER AND SELFIES

French football legend Thierry Henry was in South Africa to watch the 2019 UEFA Champions League final on television screens with dizzy fans.

BY GYPSEENIA LION

**A** TEASER CAMPAIGN ON Heineken South Africa's Twitter page unveiling the identity of a legendary footballer kicks off the 2019 season of the UEFA Champions League.

It certainly piques the attention of South African fans on social media who tentatively await the unmasking of this legend – French footballer Thierry Henry.

Even as fans attempt to piece the mysterious mosaic, the Champions League 100 club member is already making his way from Europe to watch the much-anticipated UEFA Champions League tournament final on June 1, on a giant television screen with his South African fans, at the Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit race track in Johannesburg.

South Africa's vibrant football culture finds expression in all venues, from the dusty make-shift fields that continue to play a crucial role in community life in townships, to the manicured green pitches of gargantuan stadiums.

As Tottenham Hotspur FC and Liverpool FC take to the field for the final leg in Spain, here in Johannesburg, all eyes are on Henry, who can barely focus with all the attention on him. But these are interactions the former FC Barcelona and Arsenal FC striker would not trade for anything else – even watching the match in the comfort of his own home.

"It is always nice to have these moments with South African fans. Usually, I would be at home watching the game, but now, I am in South Africa. It is a bit surreal to watch the Champions League that happens in Europe, in Africa," he tells FORBES AFRICA.



Watching the all-English final on South African soil evoked nostalgia, and Henry reminisces the beginning of an illustrious career in football.

"I went to Monaco [to play] as a youngster; that was the choice. I didn't know we were going to make the Champions League. I was just trying to be a football player," he says.

Henry then moved to Arsenal, and then Barcelona where he ended up winning the Champions League.

The bulk of the retired footballer's career as a player was in the English Premier League for Arsenal FC that saw him as Arsenal's all-time top scorer, with 228 goals, for the club.

"The moves were based on competing, trying to get the best out of myself and get the best out of my teammates," he says.

Despite a two-nil loss on Henry's first professional appearance for Monaco in 1994, first impressions should make a lasting

**IT IS A BIT SURREAL TO WATCH THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE THAT HAPPENS IN EUROPE, IN AFRICA.**

impact, he says.

"For me, it is always the first game, it is very important because you are now on the scene and you need to make sure that everybody can see what you are about in that particular moment. I remember losing the first game but I had an impact and the rest is history."

On June 1, Liverpool FC was crowned champions in the 64th season of the premier football tournament.

The win for the English team meant more beer, selfies and snapshots with Henry for the few lucky South African soccer fans, and again, the rest is history. **P**

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# MPHO POPPS' GHANA

The 32-year-old South African comedian traveled to the West African country for some eye-opening experiences.

BY MOTLABANA MONNAKGOTLA



**S**OUTH AFRICAN COMEDIAN, actor and entrepreneur, Mpho 'Poppo' Modikoane, is a frequent traveler but ask him about his happy place and he says it's a little corner of Africa named Ghana.

He has traveled overseas before, but it was his travels within Africa that opened his eyes to the magic of the continent, and made him realize that all Africans have the same stories and are essentially the same.

"It's just these borders we were brought up [in that] we don't take the time to learn about each other's cultures and share each other's stories," says Modikoane.

"I've traveled to a lot of countries over the years and early on in my career, I was in the US. A few years ago, I went to Canada for the annual Just For Laughs international comedy festival and these places are amazing, but traveling in Africa has been the most eye-opening for me."

Modikoane's career kick-started in 2009 on the reality TV show, *So You Think You're Funny?* His growing audiences haven't stopped laughing since.

With fame, came the chances to travel. His very first trip to West Africa was to Nigeria on Arik Air two years ago, when he flew business class.

"I don't know what it is about us [black people], but when we don't have things, we don't see why it's necessary – we don't understand why we have to pay R30,000

(\$2,000) for a seat, a leather seat," he says, chuckling.

He goes on to elaborate with his trademark wit: "The seat is reclined all the way, we are drinking champagne in glasses; I didn't even know there were glasses on planes.... Even forks and knives. And in business class, you don't get shouted at by the attendants for reclining your seat four



**THE PEOPLE THERE WORK OUTSIDE OF THEIR WORK, AND HAVE A BUSINESS OUTSIDE OF THEIR JOB.**

centimeters back, never! Even the magazines are not the same – we get business magazines and informative magazines. We even have a food menu with pages."

That was his trip to Nigeria when on the ground, he was impressed by the hard work of the locals, the hustle and bustle of the streets and everything from bikes and Maybachs driving past him.

However, Ghana was his most memorable destination where he stayed five days.

"Ghana just looks beautiful and is next to Nigeria and they have this feud going on about who makes the best *jollof* rice and after tasting both, I have to give it up to Ghana,"

says the comedian.

What he also loved about Ghana was its orderliness, and the warmth of the people.

What impressed Modikoane was that the people did not wait for the government to give them handouts and opportunities; the locals were willing to work hard to find them.

"The people there work outside of their work, have a business outside of their job and that's the one thing I've come to realize about traveling in Africa. We [South Africans] are sitting in the land of opportunity but we are not working as hard as those from other parts of Africa. That is the magic of going to these places and spending time with other artists or musicians who also may have [on the side] their own clothing store, a restaurant, a barber shop..."

Modikoane juxtaposes his experiences in Ghana and South Africa, making various comparisons in the ways people conduct their lives. "When you go outside of South Africa, you see the Africanness of our continent. We South Africans have the modern, western element and live with white people in our communities and our country is not fully ours, but there, it's *theirs*. Their heritage is rich, their culture is rich."

And the most important part about visiting the rest of Africa for Modikoane?

"They make you feel like a celebrity," he chuckles again. **F**



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Kevin Anderson

# GAMIE ON!

South African tennis has seen an explosion in sponsorship revenue and a growing young player base, but is still some years away from the prestige of hosting a global ATP event.

BY NICK SAID

**T**ENNIS HAS MADE significant strides in South Africa in recent times, but challenges remain as it competes for the attention of a young audience across the spectrum of society and strives to produce players for the international stage.

This is all against the backdrop of potential changes at the very top of the game, where the cost and viability of hosting certain events is being questioned, as is the money earned by the world's leading players.

Gavin Crookes, President of Tennis South Africa, says the future of the game in the country is positive, but admits there is “a long way to go” as they try to take the sport into communities that have not had access in the past.

“We are currently in a building phase, but our overall strategy is to get South Africa back to being one of the leading tennis nations,” Crookes tells FORBES AFRICA.

“We are coming off a low base, but we are making significant

headway and bringing in significant sponsorship to create an enabling environment for tennis in South Africa.

“Three years ago, our total gross income was R10 million (\$680,000). This 2019/20 financial year, we are expecting an annual turnover of around R50 million (\$3.4 million). So that is a significant increase in a short period of time.”

Crookes believes there has been a change in attitude from potential sponsors, who had shied away from Tennis South Africa in the past for a number of reasons, including governance and poor delivery.

“It has been an issue in the past, we have to acknowledge that, but we now have a determined board and are able to give stakeholders the comfort that we are running the business of tennis well.

“Our CEO Richard Glover [of Tennis South Africa] was previously the commercial manager at [English Premier League side] Arsenal and worked at Cricket South Africa. He

knows what sponsors want. The critical thing is delivering to stakeholders and being consistent in what we do.”

Critical to the future of the game in the country is broadening the player base at a young age, and that means tapping into a market that has traditionally been excluded because of a lack of facilities and financial constraints.

“If you look at junior tennis, in the age groups of Under-12, -14, -16 and -18, the largest percentage of the 5,000 kids we have registered is at Under-12. So that is positive.

“Our biggest challenge is establishing tennis as a sport in schools. We can’t argue that it is a problem. Tennis is an expensive sport in that it involves one-on-one coaching and the actual tennis courts cost a lot of money.

“This is obviously a problem in the rural areas and former townships, but we are working with government on this. I can definitely say that there is a greater interest in tennis than even four or five years ago.”

On the playing front, Kevin Anderson’s runs to the US Open (2017) and Wimbledon (2018) finals in recent years have provided a boost interest, while Lloyd Harris broke into the world’s top 100 players earlier this year and reached the second round of the 2019 French Open.

“We are now in a position where we can financially assist our junior players and the likes of Lloyd Harris to help them in their careers. Four of our juniors made it to the 2019 Australian Open, and we are hoping to have four at the US Open later this year.

“It is critically important for our tennis to have role-models kids can look up to.”

What South Africa has lacked in recent decades is an event on the global ATP tour, and Crookes admits is still some way off, though they are taking baby-steps towards making it a reality.

“This is part of our strategy, there is



**WE ARE CURRENTLY IN A BUILDING PHASE, BUT OUR OVERALL STRATEGY IS TO GET SOUTH AFRICA BACK TO BEING ONE OF THE LEADING TENNIS NATIONS.**

– GAVIN CROOKES

no doubt. It is part of our desire to create interest in tennis. People want to see top players.

“The current cost of hosting an ATP250 event is around R50 million (\$3.4 million), which, as I mentioned previously would be our entire expected turnover for this financial year. So it is just not viable at the moment.”


Crookes says they are instead looking to host some Transition Tour events this year, which have been introduced to bridge the gap between the junior tours and the senior professional game in what has been a major restructuring of tennis by the International Tennis Federation (ITF).

ITF research found that while over 14,000 players compete each year in professional tournaments, only around 350 men and 250 women break even financially without the consideration of coaching costs.

This is providing a huge hurdle for prospective players and the Transition Tour events are aimed at cutting travel costs for players. Crookes says there are “interesting times” ahead for global

tennis, and South Africa must adapt.

“In terms of the business model of the ATP, there is so much money focussed on the top 10 to 15 players. Even Novak Djokovic has been muttering that the top players in the world are taking 80 percent of the income from the game, and the rest must all survive on 20 percent.

“Changes are coming in how tennis tournaments are run as a business model and we need to take that into consideration. It is interesting times ahead for the game.” 

# YOUTH RISING

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPH: MOTLABANA MONNAKOTLA

**W**ITH 60% OF the entire continent aged below 25, Africa is the youngest continent in the world.

Every year, South Africa observes June as Youth Month, honoring the anniversary of the Soweto Uprising as Youth Day on June 16.

In this image, the country's sprawling township of Soweto comes alive on the day, as the youth dance in winter weather to local and international music at the Soweto International Jazz Festival – an

annual confluence of history, art and culture.

On June 16, 43 years ago, there was no music but sounds of gunfire, when South African policemen gunned down scores of schoolchildren in the Soweto Uprising.

The students were protesting Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in secondary schools. The protest and the police firing led to the death of 13-year-old student Hector Pieterse, and an iconic photograph the world came to associate with South Africa's brutal apartheid regime. **F**





# 'ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR AFRICA'

**R**ECENTLY INVITED BY THE CANADIAN government on a media tour showcasing its ocean economy, I was curious to find what Africa could learn from the maritime powerhouse Canada is.

Our tour started in St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. Larry Hann, our guide, explained that the cod fishing industry began in Newfoundland in the late 15th century, when Italian navigator, John Cabot, received funding by King Henry VII to do some exploring.

"The cod was so plentiful at that point that [Cabot]...thought his ship, the Matthew, was striking the bottom of the ocean when it was in fact striking cod," said Hann.

It eventually made Newfoundland famous. By the 1980s, though, the waters teeming with cod seemed a distant myth. Overfishing by foreign vessels within their Exclusive Economic Zone had all but dried up the cod population. In 1992, the Canadian government imposed a moratorium on cod fisheries in the northwest Atlantic, as cod stocks had fallen below 1% of earlier noted biomass, marking the largest industrial closure in the country's history.

The collapse of the area's cod fisheries is just one example of a global trend. After a century of overfishing and climate change, there could be a crisis looming over the ocean economy, including trade, tourism and fisheries, which the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) estimates to be at \$24 trillion.

It's not all doom and gloom in Canada's ocean economy, though. Corporate and government bodies are working together in many areas to combat this. Institutions specializing in the ocean sector are driving the growth and innovation of Canada's blue economy.

One such is the Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland, a center of marine learning and applied research. Glenn Blackwood, Vice-President of the institute, who has been involved in training in Namibia and Tanzania, said it's necessary to start at entry-level jobs. "You can't be captain the first day on the ships," he explained, "but you train them to a very high level."

"There is work to be done," Blackwood continues, "because Africa has always been looked at as land-based." This is despite the fact that "there's enormous opportunity for Africa in the blue economy", though Africa can only take advantage of this through investing in people.

"It's the best investment you can make – if you invest in the people, then the oil and gas or fisheries resources... goes to the people," he adds.

Nova Scotia is one of eastern Canada's maritime provinces.

The commercial fishing industry here also has a history spanning centuries, and the ocean lapping its shores still shapes the local economy. Nova Scotia has in excess of 300 ocean companies, together employing over 35,000. Explains Mayor Mike Savage of Nova Scotia's capital Halifax: "Be it through ocean tech, fisheries, aquaculture,

ship-building, ocean observation, marine-centered defence or transportation... [the ocean economy] runs deeply through our economy and culture."

This is evidently the case, as Nova Scotia, and more broadly, Canada's Atlantic regions, have consistently been leading ocean technology advancements for over a century. Some of these include industry-shifting inventions such as the variable pitch propeller and kerosene, which became the lighting source for ships in 1846.

It is on the back this history that they have developed institutions such as the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship (COVE), an ocean technology business park that brings together people, ideas, industry and research. Their tenants include big corporations, such as IBM and Lockheed Martin, as well as startups and small entrepreneurs.

But Jim Hanlon, CEO of COVE, says one of the biggest obstacles relates to collaboration.

"There are three levels of government involved... one of the biggest challenges is getting them all to move at the same time." Undoubtedly, this will also hold true for the African context. Cooperation will be vital in taking full advantage of our blue economy. He posits that, "you need a champion; you need someone who believes in this very strongly".

One of their champions is Canada's Ocean Supercluster, an industry-led collaboration focused on building ocean-related business activities, research capacity and technological expertise. One of their mandates is building a stronger ocean network, creating an ecosystem where all players achieve economic and sustainable prosperity.

Kendra MacDonald, CEO of Canada's Ocean Supercluster, saw the many industries such as "shipping, defence, aquaculture, fisheries, natural health products", share similar challenges, as they all do business in the ocean in silos. These shared challenges are around cost and risk. "The communication costs on water is still greater than on land," she says.

Given that 38 of 54 countries are coastal, there's potential for Africa to harness its vast coastline. My takeaway from Canada was that innovation can only be born from a foundation of skills and knowledge. Creating a network between the private sector, government and academia is vital.

There aren't cookie-cutter solutions we can lift from Canada. We can, however, look at the methods they used to create a more efficient ocean economy sector, and investigate how it can be applied to Africa's maritime context. **1**

– The writer is head of East Africa for the ABN Group.



# AMID TRADE WARS, WHAT AFRICA MUST DO

**I**N WORLD WAR II, MY GRANDUNCLE FRANS Nyamande was among the people conscripted to fight in North Africa. He was entangled in the combat between Erwin Rommel and Bernard Montgomery. He did not know what this war was about. It was a World War but essentially a European war. However, with Africa as a colony of Europe at the time, we were entangled and my granduncle signed up. As the old adage goes, ‘when elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers’.

We are living in a dangerous era where the two superpowers are at war. The United States (US) and China, the two largest economies, are in a trade war. Like any other war, trade wars, too, have their own collateral damage. The genesis of this war was a complaint by US President Trump accusing China of unfair trade.

The problem is the US exports goods to the tune of \$60 billion to China whereas China exports goods worth \$600 billion to the US. This, according to the US President, is unfair trade. This quid pro quo imposition of import tariffs is already damaging the world economy, and the consequence of this will be devastating.

This trade war has escalated and now includes information and communications technology company Huawei. It started with the arrest of the Chief Financial Officer of Huawei, Meng Wanzhou, in Canada for allegedly violating sanctions against Iran. She is awaiting extradition to the US. In retaliation, China arrested two Canadians for drug-related offences.

When we thought the end was near, the US banned its companies from supplying technology tools to Huawei. The Huawei smart phone uses a software called Android, which was created by the US company Google.

This ban meant that Google could no longer support Huawei. Furthermore, this ban also means that US semiconductor companies can no longer supply semiconductor chips to Huawei.

To understand the implications of this trade war, one ought to understand the strengths and weaknesses of China and the US. China has emerged the most sought-after country in the world when it comes to the manufacturing of hardware. The US leads in the creation of software and computer chips. The interdependencies of these technological superpowers is extensive. For example, the US multinational technology company Apple makes its hardware in China, whereas many Chinese companies use computer chips made by US companies.

The British political economist David Ricardo in 1817 came up with a theory of comparative advantage. Comparative advantage states that for countries to be mutually prosperous, they should concentrate on those goods that they have comparative advantage over and trade those that they are not good at producing. This,



therefore, means that trade wars are bad for the overall prosperity of the global economy. Given the fact that trade wars are becoming more likely, how should African countries position themselves so they are not adversely affected by them?

The first strategy African countries should adopt is they should be non-aligned to global superpowers. This essentially means we should not take sides in these trade wars.

The late former Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and the leader of Yugoslavia, Josip Tito, introduced the concept of non-alignment during the cold war between the Soviet Union and the US. They observed that for developing countries to maximize their prosperity, they ought to remain neutral during the cold war and, therefore, not be aligned to either of the two superpowers. African countries are dependent on both China and the US for technology and, therefore, should maintain good relations with both.

Secondly, African countries should develop sovereign technological capacity. When the Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 Max 8 crashed earlier this year, the black box from this plane had to be taken to France to be analysed because we did not have the technological expertise to do so.

Naturally, for us to develop sovereign technology, we need to expand educational opportunities across the continent. **F**

– The writer is a professor and Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg. He deputizes President Cyril Ramaphosa on the South African Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution.



# IS CELLULOID DEAD?

**T**HE DIGITAL REVOLUTION was the move from physical media to digital media, the transition from HD to 4K, but what does this mean for the future of film as a medium of acquisition? Well, at this point, I think we can safely say that although shooting on 35MM or 16MM film may become specialist, even niche, it will certainly never die out completely, thanks in part to certain stalwart Hollywood directors like Quentin Tarantino who refuse to shoot digitally.

What digital acquisition of video content has done, is that it has reduced the costs of acquiring footage and essentially democratized the film-making process. Movies can be shot and produced for a fraction of the cost that they were on celluloid. Making a feature film is now accessible to everyone. The main issue, however, with digital masters and acquisition, is how we archive and are those archives tried and tested? In a word, no, and herein lies the reason that 35MM and 16MM film in general will never die out completely.

When we take a look at archiving in general – when high definition revolutionized television content acquisition way back in 2000 and 2001 and DVD became the norm for home video viewers – we all thought that this was the pinnacle of new technology, the picture clarity, the sound, the colors; could this ever be improved upon? It was improved upon in less than five years with the advent of 4K content acquisition. Take a trip down memory lane and look at some of those early features and TV series shot in high definition (1080p), films like *Session 9* and *Star Wars – Attack of the Clones* – do their visuals hold up to today's standards? No, they don't. With 4K and even 8K content acquisition, HD seems positively antiquated and certainly looks that way when viewing these films.

This is where film still trumps these formats as a basic storage format. Movies shot on 35MM or even 16MM stock is a

physical frame size. Now this individual frame can be scanned and blown up to any size you want it as, there is no limit in terms of mastering and remastering because it's a physical medium. This is the actual frame of film, it exists, it's organic, you can touch it, as opposed to modern digital acquisition which is merely terabytes of digital ones and zeros – it exists only on hard-drives.

Let me give you an example of bad digital archiving. There's a whole generation of digital photographs between 2000 and 2010 that have almost simply ceased to exist whether it be attributed to a hard-drive crash – a software upgrade or a computer crash. How are these modern movies going to be archived and stored? Will one be able to revisit one of them, like a film print in over a hundred years' time and it's still there, still plays and still exists.

*Gone with the Wind* and *Wizard of Oz*, both shot in 1938 and released in 1939 have been remastered in 4K and they look like they were shot yesterday. In another five years, they can still access these prints, digitally scan them again and size them up to 8K if necessary. These films are now 80 years old – will you be able to access a digital feature in the same way?

The truth is that only time will tell, but this does make for an interesting debate.

Another example of retrieving

amazing archives is the recently-released documentary *Apollo 11* through CNN Films. The national archives in the US had recently discovered 65mm and 70mm film reels of the preparation for and the actual moon landing in 1969. Now the frame size of the film, much like the name suggests, 70mm, is huge. These archive films were then scanned into modern film scanners and painstakingly remastered into the new IMAX digital format. Having recently watched the film, I can attest to the fact that the presentation is truly breath-taking. The details, the colors, the clarity, it truly is a sight to behold. One would never say the footage was shot in 1969.

Which brings me to my final point: Until digital can prove to us all that in a decade's time, all these 'digital' masters can still be accessed and stored and made easily available – it hasn't proved itself as good an archive as good old-fashioned celluloid. Kodak may be all but dead in terms of acquisition but its legacy lives on forever in the archives and will continue to do so. **f**

– The writer is the Executive Producer of entertainment at CNBC Africa and the owner of film and TV production company, 42nd Street Films, in Johannesburg.





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# 'INVESTMENT STRATEGIES ARE LIKE FOOD DIETS'

Nedbank's Executive Head of Emerging Payments, Chipo Mushwana, on new payment solutions for Africa, and the things money can't buy.

## **YOU ARE NOW IN CORPORATE, BUT WHAT HAVE YOUR OWN PREVIOUS BUSINESS VENTURES BEEN?**

I've been involved in a number of business ventures, the most notable being my fashion business utilizing African print to make bespoke and retail designs. I have also been fortunate to have worked in entrepreneurial ventures, some of which were like my own.

## **WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS HEAD OF EMERGING PAYMENTS AT NEDBANK?**

My unconventional definition to this role is the ability to pre-empt the future of payments and how people relate to their money as it becomes less tangible and more psychological, and creating a relationship of comfort with their money. My role affords me the opportunity to create new payment solutions as well as transform and revitalize existing product payment offerings. Through this role, I run a new product development incubator that designs and launches product offerings in the exciting and competitive space of payments and transactional payment products. This involves a lot of research, innovation and strategic partnerships.

## **WHAT DOES THE TERM 'FREEDOM TO TRANACT' MEAN TO YOU?**

Transactions are an inevitable byproduct of living because they enable business and persons to exchange value, thereby driving economic activity. This means any person can own this contribution to society. All transactions that flow from one hand to another, one account to another, and even across countries, affect GDPs and the economic virility of that country. That freedom means when it comes to your

money, you are allowed to hold financial institutions accountable because you are a participating citizen to society, no matter how much you have.

## **WHAT IS YOUR OWN INVESTMENT STRATEGY?**

This a cliché but I think it's always a long-term game, and honestly, some of the best investment strategies are not always the ones that have the greatest historical returns. The best strategies are those that work best for you based on what return you are looking for and your risk tolerance. Investment strategies are like food diets – the best strategy is the one that works best for you.

## **YOUR BIGGEST INVESTMENT BLUNDER YET, IF ANY?**

The same way the stock market is controlled by two emotions: fear and greed. I have made an investment decision riddled with these two emotions and the transaction did not yield the best gains possible because I was literally just scrambling. To my detriment, this was a joint venture with two other parties that knew more about the industry than I did, and I was geographically far from the operations and this restricted my ability to act quickly and grow my investment.

## **WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED INVESTMENT AND WHY?**

Two things that money cannot buy: My time, and my family, the greatest asset on my personal balance sheet.

## **HOW DO YOU REMAIN FINANCIALLY DISCIPLINED?**


I plan for every major milestone in my life



**MY IDEOLOGY IS TO SPEND BASED ON NEED AND SATISFY THE WANTS SPARINGLY.**

as best as possible, and budget accurately by inputting the right data and provisions. Secondly, I think it's so important to diversify your income streams and always have money that is passively working or growing for you. My ideology is to spend based on need and satisfy the wants sparingly.

## **YOUR MOST EXPENSIVE ACQUISITION?**

My home, which is my sanctuary. 

– Interviewed by Gypseenia Lion



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# ELECTION WATCH IN SENEGAL

In the vibrant city of Dakar, capturing the promise and propaganda of the polls this year.

BY RAMDAS IYER

**F**LYING FROM BRUSSELS TO Dakar early this year, I found myself surrounded in the plane by a swarm of social workers, bureaucrats, human rights activists and press reporters. Little did I realize the importance of the elections that was going to take place on February 19 in Senegal, where the handover of power from one elected government to the next was about to take place.

The Djoloff Hotel, a boutique hotel famous for its NGO clientele and an amazing jazz club, seemed like an election hub.

Each morning I was there, I had the opportunity to chat with members from various organizations such as Amnesty International, press reporters from African Union countries, and a few members of a large contingent from the EU Election Commission invited by the Senegalese government as observers.

Senegal remains one of the most stable democracies in Africa and has a long history of participating in international peacekeeping and regional mediation. Democracy and free elections are a matter of considerable pride for its citizens.

Civil liberties have improved over time, and the country is known for its relatively independent media and public engagement in free expression and debate. Ongoing challenges include alleged corruption in government, acts to suppress press freedom, and inadequate protection of the rights of women.

Dakar is a vibrant city on the Atlantic fringed by the Sahel desert on one side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other. Two days before the elections, barring noisy propaganda vehicles with their constant babble, the city was very peaceful. Every road and street had large posters of President Macky Sall, while those of his opponents were largely absent, often



clustered in invisible locations.

Since 70% of Senegalese live in rural areas, it was my intent to study the election from a small town. Thus, I arrived in Djiffer, a fishing port 165km south of Dakar in the Saloum Delta. I was skeptical about travel during election day especially in areas where the reach of the law is limited. I was amazed at the excitement and participation of local village folk.

The women were dressed in their finery while the men did their best to match them. Conversation was polite, the queuing very civil and the air filled with pride. However, this notion did not preclude them from realizing the presumed uneven-handedness of politicians.


Eventually, Sall (of the Senegalese Democratic Party) won the polls without the need for a second round of voting; election officials announced in Dakar.

The four opposition candidates (there were over 80 political parties) said they would not pursue a legal challenge, ending days of uncertainty in this democracy long known for its peaceful transfers of power. The president ultimately received 58.27% of the vote, re-

elected for a second term.

It is always comforting to see elections conducted in a relatively peaceful manner, especially in Africa. I was particularly impressed by the *joie de vivre* of the citizens excited about their right to participate.

As a voter based in the United States, I immediately noticed how drab our election process is, on a comparative basis. We arrive in our cars; we hide behind a screen and press a couple of buttons. There are no discussions, gatherings or pageantry primarily reserved for television audiences. The well-appointed post vote gathering in Djiffer gave a different meaning to this election I saw. There was a respect for institutions along with hope that an elected official could bring about desired changes to their country. Regardless of the outcome, the Senegalese set the stage for other peaceful elections to follow in Africa, including South Africa.

On the flight back, I returned with enough memories and a camera that had captured a piece of history in a little corner of Africa. 

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