

LéO **review**

A F R I C A

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T O P
20

East
Africans
UNDER 30

Ephraim

R W A M W E N G E

23-year-old at
the helm of a
conglomerate

Coins FoD

HOPE FOR TORORO YOUTH

CONTRIBUTING TO THE AFRICA WE WANT



Contributing to the Africa We Want.

Today, about 65 per cent of Africa's population is below the age of 35. Also, in less than three generations to come, 41 per cent of the world's youth will be African.

Complemented by the power of youth innovation and activism, these numbers speak strongly about the urgency to effectively engage African young women and men in shaping a generation of leaders, committed to values that foster good governance and accountability.

At the Léo Africa Institute, we have since 2013 directly reached out to these passionate, committed and socially-conscious emerging young leaders across Africa through our forums and high level dialogues.

Our core programmes are built around leadership development through effective trainings, community participation, and engagement with policy makers.

Our forums and high-level dialogues in Kampala and Kigali over the last three years have facilitated discussion between emerging leaders and decision makers in government on themes ranging from the extractive industry in Uganda and the region, to the role of young people in driving the post-2015 International Development Agenda envisaged by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The success of these efforts is defined by a growing number of value-driven leaders across the East African region who are not only committed to a just and fair society but are also making a contribution towards reducing poverty and inequality.

Our Programmes & Initiatives

The Economic

Forum (July 22, 2016)

An annual gathering of industry experts, government leaders, academia and private sector actors to discuss, among other things, the state of the economy in the East African region. The forums have over the last two years addressed pertinent issues related to the extractives industry in East Africa.

The Young and Emerging Leaders Project (TBA)

The Young and Emerging Leaders Project (Y&ELP) is Léo Africa's flagship training focused on young leaders in government, civil society, the media and social entrepreneurs. The project seeks to annually induct 20 exceptional young and emerging leaders from across these important sectors into the Léo Africa Institute Training Academy where they are equipped with skills in transformational leadership, governance and accountability.

The Youth Advisory Group on the Sustainable Development Goals

Convened in partnership with the UN country team, the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) is tasked with monitoring and tracking Uganda's adoption of the recently adopted sustainable development goals into relevant policies by government. The group, which includes representatives from official youth structures such as the National Youth Council, youth members of Parliament and development experts meets regularly with decision makers in government and development partners to advocate for more inclusive participation by young people in the Post-2015 Development Agenda Discussion.



Konrad
Adenauer
Stiftung

KAS-Promoting Democracy and Good Governance

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

51A Prince Charles Drive, Kololo
P.O Box 647, Kampala/Uganda



The KAS is a political foundation, closely associated with the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU). As co-founder of the CDU and the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Konrad Adenauer (1876-1967) united Christian-social, conservative and liberal traditions. His name is synonymous with the democratic reconstruction of Germany, the firm alignment of foreign policy with the trans-Atlantic community of values, the vision of a unified Europe and an orientation towards the social market economy. His intellectual heritage continues to serve both as our aim as well as our obligation today.

KAS has a history of being actively involved in Uganda's political development for close to four decades now. This involvement has been taking different shapes and formats but they have been directly anchored on promoting democracy, good governance, rule of law and justice. A significant contribution of the foundation has been the consolidation of the multi-party political system through building the capacity of major political parties in Uganda. Furthermore, in light of the still prevailing problematic socio-economic situation in the country it is crucial to ensure economic development with social benefits. We have therefore promoted initiatives like intellectual engagements and debates which promotes the values of social market economy.

As crosscutting issues, the empowerment of women and youths and media development receives special attention in our activities. We have partnered with several organizations like ACFODE, University Forum on Governance, Uganda Martyrs University to directly support women to support initiatives like university leadership debates, community grassroots women economic empowerment and advancing scholarships to brilliant but disadvantaged youth in Uganda. We have traditionally supported journalistic development in Uganda and today we have been at the forefront of civic and social media engagement with our partner the Centre for Media Literacy and Community Development (CEMCO).

Our resolve to continue reshaping the socio-economic and political landscape in Uganda keeps climbing big leaps and we are excited to partner with the LÉO Africa Institute as an incredible part of our journey.

>> Note from the Director at LÉO Africa Institute

Contributing to the Africa we want

It is always exciting working on a new project, especially a literary one where we are looking to share ideas and influence conversations on important social issues of our time.

The LÉO Africa Review is such a project. I am thrilled we managed to get a great group of intellectual thought leaders to put all this together. I am amazed at the journalistic abilities of our young team of writers, editors and contributors. Kudos to you all for transforming this idea into a real product!

In our commitment to working with young people and emerging leaders, we decided to tap into their curiosity and innovative thinking, and extend the debate platform from our usual seminars, conferences and workshops into a magazine.

For the cover story of our first issue, we feature Ephraim Rwamwenge, an emerging leader and accomplished entrepreneur whom we are privileged to be associated with. His story is an inspirational example of how the young generation in Africa are transcending challenges and painting a hopeful future for themselves and others. Ephraim's story exhibits admirable qualities of thinking big, perseverance, focus and hard work, all admirable traits we urge our young leaders network to associate with.



Awel Uwhanganye
Senior Director and
Co-Founder
LÉO Africa Institute

...we have remained firm in our belief that for Africa to grow and realize its true potential we have to aggressively and strategically invest in young people.

Since our inception as an Institute in 2012, we have remained firm in our belief that for Africa to grow and realize its true potential we have to aggressively and strategically invest in young people. It is not enough to say that Africa should not have her future or narrative defined by others and fail to invest enough in innovative story telling ventures and environments that allow free thought among the young generation to thrive.

Many have asked why I commit to what I do, especially with the challenges, and stress that comes with social enterprise start-ups. For long, I have not had a coherent answer but when I read stories of 20 young leaders under 30 years from the East African region, it encourages me to commit even further in expanding space for more innovative, creative social actors and entrepreneurs to thrive.

As a lover of books, I am thrilled the editors have picked an impressive selection of book choices for readers in this issue.

I should keep this short so you can get to the rest in the magazine. Enjoy this first issue.

Happy Reading!

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Making baby steps

Ian Katusiime

Editor - Léo Africa Review



It is a pleasure for us here at Léo Africa Review to publish our first issue! Like new parents, we are ecstatic about this new child, as it learns to walk and envisions endless possibilities.

It has been months of hard work, looking for new stuff, picking minds, sifting through truckloads of data trying to create a new path for a publication that breathes opportunity, light and hope for the people of Africa.

There are always false starts, stumbles, misses, fights and everything in between but we vowed to ourselves that we will battle to the end for this product to hit the streets.

The Léo Africa Review is a magazine about inspiration, leadership development and unleashing young people's creative power to take up their roles in a highly dynamic society. It was due to this underlying mission that we decided to go for novelty; introduce new people, shine a light on their work and tell the world why more attention should be paid to them.

We had an interaction with a young Rwandan entrepreneur, Ephraim Rwamwenge who crossed several borders to start a new life.

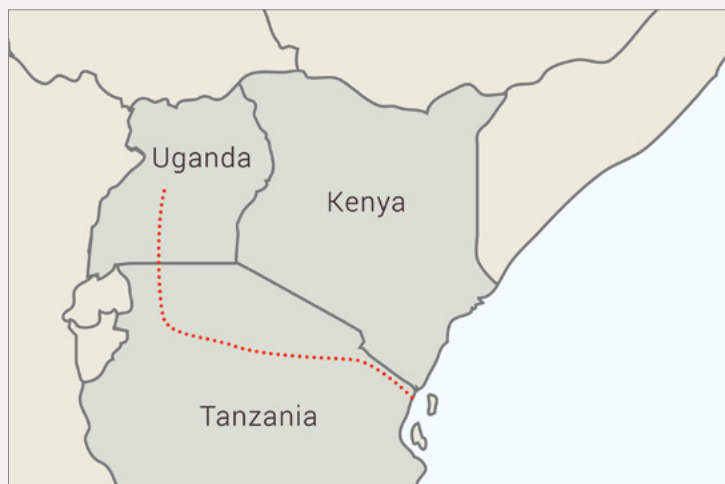
The story of this young man is one about self-belief and the call to get out of our comfort zones and confront new realities, something many of us tend to shy away from.

In another section, you will meet a crop of young East Africans who are using their creative abilities to cause change in their own societies. You will wonder who they are and why you are just hearing about some of them, but it is the reason the Léo Africa Review is here, to change the way you think about entrepreneurship and starting out.

We have compiled interesting interviews for you, thought-provoking comments and another set of individuals doing wonderful things. Read about their challenges, aspirations and what keeps them going.

This is exciting for us here and we can only hope that this is just the start of many great things.

Enjoy!



UGANDA

>> Uganda picks Tanzania for oil pipeline

Following months of clandestine boardroom activity and cautious diplomacy, the government of Uganda announced it had chosen Tanzania over Kenya as the route for its oil pipeline. The pipeline will run from Hoima, western Uganda to Tanzania's coastal town of Tanga. There was talk of Uganda picking Kenya, because of the latter's oil deposits in its northern region of Turkana but the Tanzanian prospects proved more beneficial. The project will cost \$4billion which French oil giant Total has promised to provide.



TANZANIA

>> Magufuli shakes up East Africa

John Pombe Magufuli was elected as President of Tanzania in October 2015. He has since captured the imagination of Africans with the radical measures he has implemented in Tanzania to reduce public spending and check corruption. Magufuli has suspended hospital bosses over negligence, heads of statutory authorities and cancelled Independence celebrations. At an EAC Heads of State summit, Magufuli declared he was not a "protocol person" and warned delegates against holding summits in exclusive resorts.

RSA

>> Zuma in fight for political life

South Africa President Jacob Zuma is embroiled in a fight for his office battling impeachment challenges, student protests and unending corruption in his government. In March, South Africa's Constitutional Court ruled that Zuma acted unlawfully by using state funds to renovate his upcountry home in Nkandla, KwaZulu-Natal. Zuma is under pressure from civil society, members of National Assembly and students to resign.

USA

>> Battle for the soul of America

The race to succeed US President Barack Obama took significant steps as frontrunners; Donald Trump of the Republican party and Hillary Clinton of the Democrats made major wins as multiple states voted on April 26. Billionaire Trump's unorthodox campaign has won him support from a large section of disenchanting Americans although he trails Clinton in polls. The general election takes place on November 8.

UK

>> Britain: to leave or not to leave the EU

On June 23, voters in Britain will decide whether their country should remain in the European Union or not. British Prime Minister David Cameron has advocated for UK's stay in a reformed EU. Pro-EU voices say UK's economy stands to benefit as a member of the 28-nation bloc. Brexit campaigners say they are tired of Britain being told what to do and would also like to take back control of Britain's borders and determine how many people can go to work in the UK. British people seem evenly divided on the issue.

SOUTH SUDAN

>> Riek Machar returns to Juba

After more than two years of conflict, former South Sudan Vice President Riek Machar dramatically returned to Juba on April 26 and was immediately sworn in back to his office. Machar's return is a boost to the peace deal that was borne out of months of negotiations, threats and blackmail. A civil war erupted in December 2013 when Riek Machar attempted to seize power, resulting into deaths of tens of thousands and displacement of millions.



World Economic Forum in Kigali

The 26th World Economic Forum on Africa was held in Kigali from May 11-13 under the theme "Connecting Africa's Resources through Digital Transformation". Rwanda has been lauded for its improved economic business environment, fast-paced growth in ICT and it is with this backdrop that world leaders and captains of industry convened in the hilly city to discuss digital economy catalysts needed for structural transformation and public-private sector collaboration.

PRC

>> China's economic woes persist

For three decades, China's economy grew at an average annual rate of 10%. In 2015, it fell to 7.4%. Experts attribute the slowing down of the second largest economy in the world to growing public debt, low levels of profit from state enterprises and an ageing population. Chinese authorities however insist that the economy is operating in within proper range.

KENYA

>> Kenya case leaves ICC soul-searching

The International Criminal Court took a reputational hit when it dropped charges against Kenya's Deputy William Ruto and radio presenter Joshua Arap Sang. Ruto was accused of masterminding post-election violence in Kenya that claimed 1,300 lives in 2008. Following the ruling, supporters of Ruto and President Uhuru Kenyatta organised a rally in Nairobi to celebrate the victory day. However opposition leader Raila Odinga accused the duo of mocking the victims of the clashes.



Death of a music icon

The Congolese rumba super star collapsed and died on stage in Abidjan, Ivory Coast as he did what he does best, entertaining. With a musical career spanning forty years, Papa Wemba wanted to be remembered just as a singer, according to notes from his 1995 album: Emotion. In 1969, Papa Wemba and a group of musical friends formed Zaiko Langa Langa, a band that spread the influence of rumba music and became the symbol and cultural identity of post-independence Zaire. Papa Wemba later formed his own band, Viva Musica in 1977 that fused the genres of rumba and soukous which catapulted him to world fame and earned him the title of 'King of Congolese Rumba'.

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One of the oldest conservation areas in Uganda, the Semliki Wildlife Reserve is located in Western Uganda in Ntoroko District, off the Fort Portal-Bundibugyo Road

COINS FoD: A young man's effort to create jobs for fellow youth

By Ronald Awany

At a time when a projected 83 per cent of Uganda's youth population is unemployed, with 400,000 graduating from the university annually to compete for just 90,000 available jobs, the government of Uganda is grappling with an issue that is spiraling out of control and one that has also caused fears about security in the country.

With the income inequality and poverty that are synonymous with the unemployment problem, Cyrus Wanyama 31, the founder and Chairperson of Community Initiative For Development (CoinsFod), a youth social enterprise in Tororo district, is standing out.

The International Labour Organisation defines youth unemployment as a share of labour force age 15-24 without work but available for and seeking employment.

Wanyama has found a way to help young people dodge the bullet by engaging them in various technical activities where they learn personal saving and values of hard work in community development. Currently

the group has at least 80 youth under its umbrella engaged in repair of motorbikes, hair dressing and shop keeping.

It all started in December 2003 when Wanyama had just completed his Senior Six examinations and was in his vacation. He had seven months until he joined the university so he decided to find something to do within that period. In Wanyama's neighbourhood, there was a makeshift garage under a tree that was used to repair mostly motorcycles.

With its premises sitting on about 50 square meters of government reserve land on Rock Crescent West Street behind the Hindu Temple in the heart of Tororo town, there is a buzz of activity at this small centre that is keeping the hopes of the toiling youth.



A young man working at the CoinsFod garage

“My aim from the start was to foster self-employment at a time where the country’s youth are helplessly unemployed and living in poverty. And right now we are making tremendous steps towards that.”

The structures housing the centre are made of mostly portable metallic containers roofed with iron sheets. Some of them have a wall supported by wooden poles, with the roof and wall also made of old iron sheets.

Inside the premises, is an office with four plastic chairs and a table in one of the rooms. On the old table, which is flanked by an old office chair sit a desktop computer. In this office is where Wanyama sits and runs CoinFod as a mid-level manager.

Starting out

Wanyama saw the venture as the perfect opportunity to acquire some rudimentary skills and make some little money. When he first visited the garage as a S6 leaver, he found there fifteen men most of whom were mechanics that had dropped out of school.

Wanyama realized that the men had the requisite skills and experience but they mostly used the money they made for self-sustenance.

It is from this experience that he developed the idea of starting something much bigger.

He worked there briefly and returned to the group after completing his university studies in 2008.

“When I completed my degree in 2008 in Social Sciences, I returned to the group, it still lacked formality and the capacity to lobby so I organised and registered the group as CoinsFod as a Community Based Organisation (CBO) but we did not have capital,” Wanyama said.

“So we only offered payment for a service which meant that one was only paid for every motorcycle they repaired. We initiated a saving scheme where each member saved a certain percentage (Shs200) each day,” he added.

In a space of six months, the group had saved up to Shs 660,000, enough money to buy motorcycle spare parts and they opened a small shop next to the garage.

The shop picked up quite well and in 2010 the group expanded as more members joined including some girls who had dropped out of school at primary level.

By then the group had already moved into their new premises given to them to operate on by the local government.



“We had to start a saloon because we received about six female members to the group, two of them skilled hairdressers who trained the others,” Wanyama explains. “We used part of the savings to purchase equipment for the saloon which included a mirror, hand dryer and a shaving machine,” he adds.

At that point, the group had grown to about 38 members.

By December 2010, the group had two sections, the garage and the saloon, both tasked to grow independent of the other through generating its own revenue.

“What we were trying to avoid was a scenario where we went to the bank to ask for a loan and that’s why I continuously tasked members to save,” Wanyama clarifies.

In 2012, the group started a motor vehicle repair, generator repair and fabrication sections in order to expand on the business.

The group has now further expanded since then. They now have three mobile money shops around Tororo town, a second hand clothes boutique, an electronic shop, food



A shop attendant under CoinFod

catering section, retail shop and operate a cinema hall for telecasting football matches.

“My aim from the start was to foster self-employment at a time where the country’s youth are helplessly unemployed and living in poverty. And right now we are making

tremendous steps towards that. Changing young people’s attitude towards saving and helping them acquire the skills they will use to sustain themselves and improve the livelihoods of those around them is our target,” Wanyama says.

“So many times, young people most of them school dropouts join the group and they do not have the skill to do any of the jobs we have here, so we take the initiative to train them free of charge, so that when he or she starts working, they will give back to the group through the saving scheme” he adds.

With a population of 35 million people, where young people count for about 78 per cent below the age of 30, and 52 per cent below the age of 15, Uganda is one of the countries with the youngest population that are dependents.

Therefore, it is through multiple initiatives like CoinsFod that will complement the government efforts to counter the unemployment rate amongst the youth. ■

/// Achievements

- Some of the girls and boys have been able to go back to school through their savings.
- Each member is able to save up to Shs 150,000 per month.
- The group now provides training in motorcycle training.
- The group is now a model group in the district in unemployment reduction.
- The group acquired a backup generator to ensure efficiency.
- The group received funding from Community Driven Development fund and Northern Uganda Social Action Fund II (NUSAF II) as a result of their efforts in alleviating poverty and youth unemployment.

/// Challenges

- Inadequate equipment given the growing number of skilled personnel.
- We also have a small working space yet there is an influx of youth coming to join the group.



A hairdresser in a salon; one of CoinFod's side businesses.

With a population of 35 million people, where young people count for about 78 per cent below the age of 30, and 52 per cent below the age of 15, Uganda is one of the countries with the youngest population that are dependents.



/// Targets

- To buy a transport van to facilitate the transportation of heavy cargo.
- To acquire a bigger generator that can power the whole project in case of outages
- To expand the number of youths benefiting from the project to at least 200 in a year's time and 1000 in the next five years.
- To expand throughout the municipality by opening outlets.
- To buy a plot of land and diversify into agriculture.

Ephraim Rwamwenge

23-year-old at the helm of a conglomerate

By Ian Katusiime

Ephraim Rwamwenge is a Rwandan entrepreneur and CEO of Rwa Business Group, a conglomerate involved in coffee export, private equity and value added services in mobile technology. Rwamwenge, 23, probably the youngest CEO in the region was born and raised in Botswana.

Born to a Ugandan father and a Rwandan mother, Rwamwenge had lived in Botswana for 19 years before moving on to a new life to reconnect with his roots. He eventually made the decision to move to Rwanda in June 2012. Shortly after making the decision that turned his life around, Rwamwenge dived head first into the murky world of business using networking and the little business knowledge he had to set himself up and has since not looked back. Rwamwenge is also a member of Global Shapers Community, an initiative by World Economic Forum where young people dialogue to influence global action. The young businessman attended Botswana Accountancy College from 2011-2014.

He spoke to **Ian Katusiime** about business, leadership and seizing opportunities.

You are the head of a conglomerate - Rwa Business Group, involved in coffee export among other things. How did you set up all this in the shortest time possible?

It came down to leveraging partnerships as well as building a world-class team. When I registered the business, I registered the Rwa Business Group first because I knew deep down that it was the route I wanted to go. As much as I would like to say it was all planned, every single stage that led to the setting up of a company was done opportunistically. I found people to fund my ideas, because I learnt how to package them well. I found amazing people willing to work for the organisation early on by sharing the vision with them. And I always made sure I put my best foot forward in establishing a business networks that could help further the

agenda of the company. All that said, I owe an immense amount of it to God's favour. We, as a team, get shocked at some of the opportunities we get, beyond our own understanding.

You are involved in private equity with Rwa Capital. How do you deal with a large informal business set up in Rwanda as you seek to promote entrepreneurship?

We normally work with partners for that one. But to fully understand it, our capitalisation as a firm is so tiny compared to the need. Even if we had US\$50million of Assets Under Management, we would still not bridge the gap that exists. So currently we focus on established, formal sector businesses because they too are in desperate need of growth capital.

Having lived in Botswana and Rwanda, how would you compare the two nation's socio-economic indicators especially considering that the two countries have scored highly on things like health and education?



Ephraim is an avid reader

Credit: Rwa Business Group

“I found amazing people willing to work for the organisation early on by sharing the vision with them. And I always made sure I put my best foot forward in establishing a business networks that could help further the agenda of the company.”



Credit: Rwa Business Group

Interesting enough this month so far has seen me become an expert on the two countries in that regard. I have been asked this question more than I can recall in the past two weeks. Most people would be surprised to know that the two countries are immensely similar in results but starkly different in procedure. Botswana, unlike Rwanda, has (had) mineral wealth, ample land and a significant small population to take care of. That led to a complacency from both leaders and in turn the citizens. So you have a nation that started on '20' but is coming down. Rwanda, adversely, was not so fortunate and through colonial condition the only resource we had, the people, were subject to the fundamental principle of that time; divide and rule. That led to the Genocide Against the Tutsi in 1994 and that put the country at '0'. Rwandans resolved "never again" and have worked hard for their lives today and are working even harder to guarantee their future, a future of peace, security, prosperity and freedom from propagandism aimed at dividing them. And with such, both countries are bound to meet at some point - maybe '10', only difference is one is progressing the other is regressing. I know that might be controversial but I consider myself a Motswana even though they may not.

It is by addressing the problem that the country will see a change for the better and I am working on doing my part.

Do you think there is a leadership problem in Africa or it is us the people?

Yes we do! Without a doubt. But who's to blame is debatable. Leaders are a reflection of the people, especially since we ascribe to Western Ideologies of governance. But I believe the problem is the value we attach to integrity, or lack thereof entrenched in many of

our cultures. We are taught to 'pretend' for the greater good, authenticity is demeaned to naivety and in some cases "being white." Then the question is how do we expect to produce leaders who live, breathe and die integrity when he/she was taught otherwise growing up?

How can the chronic unemployment problem among the youth be solved in the region?

There needs to be collaboration between the public and private sector and also an overhaul of the education system to fundamentally change its rudimentary state. The private sector should also play an active role in terms of delivering quality goods and services. But ultimately, the solution lies at the macro-economic level. Here, I mean things like regional integration, removal of Non-Tariff Barriers which will open up markets and create opportunities for the youth in the region.

We are taught to 'pretend' for the greater good, authenticity is demeaned to naivety and in some cases "being white." Then the question is how do we expect to produce leaders who live, breathe and die integrity when he/she was taught otherwise growing up?

The state has to work in tandem with the private sector to unleash the potential of the labour force, through financial support to start ups, easing up on bureaucracy. We also need to diversify export markets so that we can have so many sectors to engage as many young people as possible. The evolution of technology has ensured that technology in itself is not an end but a means to it. And that translates into an array of opportunities, but opportunities that can only be seized by people that have the capacity to identify them.

So this means more training of young people in this sector to create jobs.

But the issue will be ultimately addressed at the macro-economic level.

Has President Kagame's leadership and management created opportunities for young leaders and investors like you?

Most definitely! Ask any young Rwandan if they think President Paul Kagame cares for them and a significant majority will say yes. And that is because he has invested so much in young people and given us opportunities like no other African leader today has. It is the reason his government is filled with many young people and the fruits of it are visible.

What are some of the specific ways in which he has created opportunities?

First of all, in Rwanda you can register a business even at the age of 16 which is probably the youngest to do that in Africa. The government also has a Guarantee Fund where as much up to 70% of loans taken out by young people from any bank. President Kagame also introduced a Presidential Scholar scheme with a fund of \$100million. With this, Rwandan students are sent on fully paid scholarships to universities in the US for entrepreneurship courses and the like. He also has constant engagements with the youth where he meets them in group meeting



Speaking to some team members at the Rwa Business Group headquarters.

Credit: Rwa Business Group

and activities and even on social media especially Twitter. He also constantly makes time and meets with young Rwandans in North America, Europe, and other African countries together with other youths. This is probably why young people in Rwanda are hungrier when it comes to seizing business opportunities. It's why we are obliged to rise to our best as the youths.

As a young executive, what shapes your management style?

I had to redefine what I knew business as, a definition that can remain relevant in a forever-changing business landscape. I discovered that businesses are simply three kinds

of resources that come together to achieve whatever objective is set by the person controlling them. These three resources are financial, human and environmental. My management style is shaped by those, ensuring each of those groups of resources maximise synergies and output. Everything I do and how I do it is geared towards that.

How important is networking in terms of getting ahead in life or say establishing a conglomerate?

Market research is first, followed by actually starting, then your network as the most critical aspects to ensure business success.



Hosting the 4th Annual Private Sector Federation Golden Circle Gala Dinner

Credit: Gov. of Rwanda

Your network is worth a million dollars, and make sure it is worth their time as well. So don't just take business cards and know people for the sake of claiming heavy hitters as friends in public. You actually have to make that network WORK.

What is the one thing people need to understand before they join business?

Only do something you know you can be the best at. If you can be the best at something, the love will follow. And with excellence and passion, making a million or even a billion dollars doesn't seem so impossible. ■

>> Electoral Democracy: Which way for Africa?

By Ivan Okuda

The February 18 presidential election in Uganda left a bitter taste in the mouths of the opposition and a number of Ugandans for the shabby manner in which it was conducted.

Incumbent Yoweri Museveni was declared winner with a contested 60% of the vote cast and the Supreme Court upheld his victory after a petition battle with former Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi. Museveni also unleashed raw force to nip in the bud any Ivory Coast-like incident where aggrieved voters extend their contestation beyond the polling stations.

His closest challenger and four-time presidential candidate (since 2001) Dr Kizza Besigye, also his former doctor, has his freedom dangling like an egg on the palm of the country's security agencies. The Police determine when he should be free, for how long and in what fashion. That started right after he had cast his vote.

That election, in the words of

local and international observers fell several bars below the bare minimum of a democratic process. This brings two key words to the fore: Elections. Democracy. Which and what democracy? Whose democracy? Who sets the parameters and through what process? When we say an election fell short of a democratic process, how many of our wretched of the earth, chained to poverty and detached from the soft and hard ware of the state apparatus does it even resonate with? Are the elite parrots and poor at parroting at the same time?

Uganda was the effigy of not just how elections in post-independence Africa are a complex puzzle of a failing experiment at Western modelled democracy but also the very reason

Africa needs a referendum if ever there can be such a thing. First is to establish whether we actually need elections; elections in the way we know them today. Winner takes all. And what the alternative will be.

The second limb of that referendum's purpose should hinge on why and when Africa will come to her senses, start to think originally, come up with a home grown fashion of 'democracy' in ways that allow it grow organically and it is allowed to go through the phases of growth.

We are currently operating per a template of Abraham Lincoln and his political descendants. In effect we are not only getting the whole experiment wrong but also sowing a seed today and organizing a germination party the next day.

Like a seed, democracy takes time to germinate. At least evidence from countries that accord themselves the status of father figures and particularly the US which poses as an 'International Democracy Police', indicates that democracy can even be an open ended experiment.

American political scientist Henry Kissinger in his fore-word in the book "*From Third World to First World*" by Lee Kuan Yew makes this very important argument. He advances the thought line that, what is demanded of the third world, it took the West centuries to achieve. Kissinger is right at the level of a call for better appreciation of the context of a people, that every polity is unique and a one size fits all attitude falls flat even before take-off.

But of course it is the duty and nature of the world to be impatient especially in a fast paced world like ours. Technological advancements have set our minds, aspirations and ambitions on the fast lane of the life we truly dream.

We want our leaders to see sense in and act on things such as free and fair elections, the very way we want our fast lane life to move but societies and managing them, is quite rocket science. The sea looks calm from a distance but if you test the depth of the water with both legs you can be sure to be devoured by crocodiles.

My argument is; to make a sensible and rational assessment of our electoral terrain, we must first and foremost honestly appreciate our context as a people so that the doses of impatience are the right ones, for the rightly diagnosed illness and for the right patients.

It took America 89 years to close the curtain on slavery after a civil war with the Emancipation Proclamation. It also took America 189 years to pass a law that allowed Blacks the right to vote in 1965 and another 144 years for women to vote.

Uganda has at least 70% of its



“When we say an election fell short of a democratic process, how many of our wretched of the earth, chained to poverty and detached from the soft and hard ware of the state apparatus does it even resonate with?”

population born after 1986; the year Museveni took over power after a five-year war. In Kenya, the percentage is almost the same. In Rwanda, the youth constitute more than half of the resident population. The average dependency ratio in all these countries is 80%.

Tanzania which continues to wave the flag of promise as a developing, peaceful and politically stable nation with an affluence of natural resources per a recent survey by Restless Development, has a staggering 22 million people under the age of 25 implying that half of the population is an army of young people that are the first to experience this economic and political progress.

In an article published in The Foreign Report, Tony J Spence makes a valid point, “In the next few decades Tanzania is set to experience a ‘youth boom’ as this number continues to rise rapidly. It is during this time that



the promise of the nation will fall sharply and abruptly into the hands of this generation. The problems and challenges that this group face must be confronted now in order to prevent a future of forgotten adults.”

So politics now is also very much about economics. Is it possible then that the frustration we see playing out around elections is a reflection of ‘stupid economics?’ What would happen if 80% of Uganda’s youth had jobs? Would they be as bitter with polling materials arriving at 4pm in districts where the opposition is strong? Or when an incumbent scores 100% in polling stations in his home area with 100% voter turn-out where all votes are valid?

Would these things bother us as much if we had say 30% of the youth in gainful employment? This youth boom shapes, in its own way, our reading of the situation at hand.

Lessons from China

What does China teach us? In the politics of Asian economic giant, the President is subject to the approval of the National People’s Congress, the body that elects him/her to two five-year terms. Since the presidency of Jiang Zemin, every President has also simultaneously held the positions of Communist Party of China General Secretary and

Chairman of the Central Military Commission.

China however has come under fire for some of its policies. Amnesty International reports rank it high on execution of convicts. The country also prescribes a death penalty for drug trafficking offences. Chinese citizens are generally under the grip of a dictatorial Communist Party.

Away from that though, China teaches us that if the economics of a country is sorted, a people can always circumvent what we, in sub Saharan Africa, think are the world’s worst tragedies in “undemocratic leaders who cannot organize free and fair elections.”

Why then do African countries waste time and resources pursuing an ineffective project? This is the question Tapiwa Gomo a development consultant based in Pretoria, South Africa asked in the AFK Insider.

March 20, 2016 was christened the Super Sunday. Five countries on the continent went to the polls that day. Benin, Cape Verde, Republic of Congo, Niger, Senegal and the island of Zanzibar in Tanzania all conducted electoral exercises. Benin and Niger were holding run off presidential elections while Congo was holding its first round presidential poll. Niger Cape Verde held a parliamentary election while Zanzibar was organising an election due to the cancellation of an earlier one. Senegal was conducting a referendum.

The elections bore all the hallmarks of African elections.

We have groped in this darkness of democracy for far too long, can we now get to bed and think about a model that works for Africa so by the time the sun rises we can get to business and fix the economic equations.

Benin cotton magnate Patrice Talon booted incumbent Premier Lionel Zinsou after the second round of voting. In Cape Verde, opposition party Movement for Democracy scooped the parliamentary victory for the first time in 15 years.

The examples of Nigeria’s Goodluck Jonathan and Malawi’s Rupiah Banda relinquishing the trappings of power and paving way for the victor in an election are reminders that Africa is after all on its path to the promised land of democracy.

But these countries remain odd cases.

“Everything about Congo’s presidential election was wrong from the start. First there was heavy crackdown on the opposition and independent media during the campaigns. Riot police



Kizza Besigye and Yoweri Museveni posters in Kampala

were then deployed to quell riots by opposition supporters who claimed that the election had been rigged. Communication networks including telephones, text messaging and internet service were cut off across the nation for ‘reasons of national security’ EurActive reported.

On Election Day, all drivers required special permits from government to be on the roads, which effectively made movement in the country impossible. Finally, long standing President Sassou Nguesso, 72, who was running for a third term, was declared the winner.

It is these gray areas, the dark spots on the skin of elections in

our region that must get especially the young, self-styled intelligentsia to congregate around a tea pot or at a coffee outlet in one of our capitals sprawling with high rise businesses to think, think and think through what works for Africa.

How do we stop running in circles and how do we fix the puzzle that is an experiment on the brink of bringing a people to a standstill? We have groped in this darkness of democracy for far too long, can we now get to bed and think about a model that works for Africa so by the time the sun rises we can get to business and fix the economic equations. ■

Ivan Okuda is an Investigations and Special Projects Writer with Uganda’s Daily Monitor newspaper.

A black and white portrait of Sheila Nduhukire, a woman with short, curly hair, wearing a dark blazer over a white top with large black polka dots. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

Social media is a real challenge to journalists

-Nduhukire

Credit: Kampala Express/Timothy Kalyegira

Sheila Nduhukire is a journalist with NTV Uganda. She spoke to Kwezi Tabaro about the role of the media in shaping governance, the progress Africa has made and the influence of social media.

How would you describe the state of leadership and governance in Africa today?

I think we have made strides as Africa. We have made tremendous steps but there are concerns that we could be whitewashing the gains that we have made so far and with no particular example, some of the things people used to complain about like the rule of law and press freedom are creeping back. So in comparison, we have made good strides in Africa but you get fears that we could be on a fast slide downwards with lots of uncertainty especially for the youth.

We are so empowered right now that if we utilized the weapon that social media is, we should be unstoppable...

If you are growing up in a society where there is infringement on press freedom then you might be forced to think this is the new “normal”.

What role does the media have in shaping leadership and good governance on the continent?

In a society like ours where there is still a very big audience listening to radio, and still a big audience who are not on the internet, the role of the media then becomes keeping the promise to the people; telling the truth, being accountable. Questioning, but also remaining socially accountable. We owe a lot to the population. Where the three arms of government are fighting or in bed with each other we should stand out and say, you know, this is what should be done.

Sometimes we are restricted because the people that are advertising are the very people we are supposed to hold to account and media cannot run without advertising.

In your view, how can young people in Africa tap into the power of social media to hold their governments to account and foster transparent governance?

You know, right from when I joined media I could not imagine a journalist who goes into the news room without scrolling through Social Media because there are a lot of story ideas on social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

There are many times where change has been caused on social media and not change to overthrow government but change where you have influenced policy through social media either through a hash tag, exposing government excesses through pictures, videos, etc.

We are so empowered right now that if we utilized the weapon that social media is, we should be unstoppable because even in the remotest of villages you can still send through videos and pictures of what is happening and it is shared across the world. We need to move on from the chit-chat and parody accounts and embrace the potential that social media provides.

I can tell you, my joining media was through a tweet, which is how I got to know about media lab (organized by Nation Media Group) and applied for the training. Here I am.

It is a very big space; very uncontrolled space but its potential is also so huge, you just need to be focused.

The UN recently adopted a set of 17 goals, one of which is achieving gender equality by 2030. Do you think women in the media industry have made

progress towards reducing the gender gap?

I am not a feminist so maybe I might come off as insensitive. We have looked at this emancipation debate as a right of way even when you have not worked hard, you want to be there. You must live up to the challenge, you cannot say I am a woman and therefore I need to sit on this committee. Society should not do us favours because we are women.

Whether we have told enough stories about women in the media, we can do more. Overall, I think the media has tried to highlight the women struggle, I don't want us to think that gender equality is a given, we should work our way to emancipation and not wait for favours.

I also take notice of the fact that we are seeing more women take up leadership positions in the media; there are many women going out to do "hard" news stories – fields that are otherwise thought to be for men.

As a female journalist, what is your perception of how women in the profession are treated? Are there different standards set for female reporters by the public and their supervisors?

I have heard stories where women say, you cannot do this story because you are a woman. You can sense it in our media industry when crime stories, war reporting stories are usually reserved for men under the pretext of "protecting" female reporters. Yet these are stories the public wants to see.

But I also know of women who are afraid to do such stories, so I think it is 50/50.

/// Vox Pop

What's your assessment of the media in Uganda following the 2016 general election?

"My view is that the media is growing in terms of the quantity of channels expanding across the country but less in quality because increasingly the political and economic influence bearing on the media practitioners and media houses means they can only toe the correct political line."

Charles Odongtho
Journalist

"The operational context of media in Uganda is a cocktail of potential and despair. On the one hand you have (mostly young) journalists that are putting in extra shifts, seeking new knowledge, exploring new areas like data and investigation – and standing out for it. We also have others who barely scratch the surface and are content with the bare minimum.

The potential to grow is immense. Citizen and cross-platform journalism – especially with new media – continue to create more spaces for journalism to grow and assess themselves against the best from around the world. It can only get better."

Benjamin Rukwengye,
works with African Centre for
Media Excellence

You spent a lot of time covering the recently concluded election campaign. As a journalist, what have you learnt from covering the political process in Uganda?

One of the biggest regrets is that there are many things you see but you cannot say. Our duty as journalists is to report it as we see it but that is as far as it can go. There are a lot of things you see but just can't say because it overwhelms you; because what you expect is not what you see.

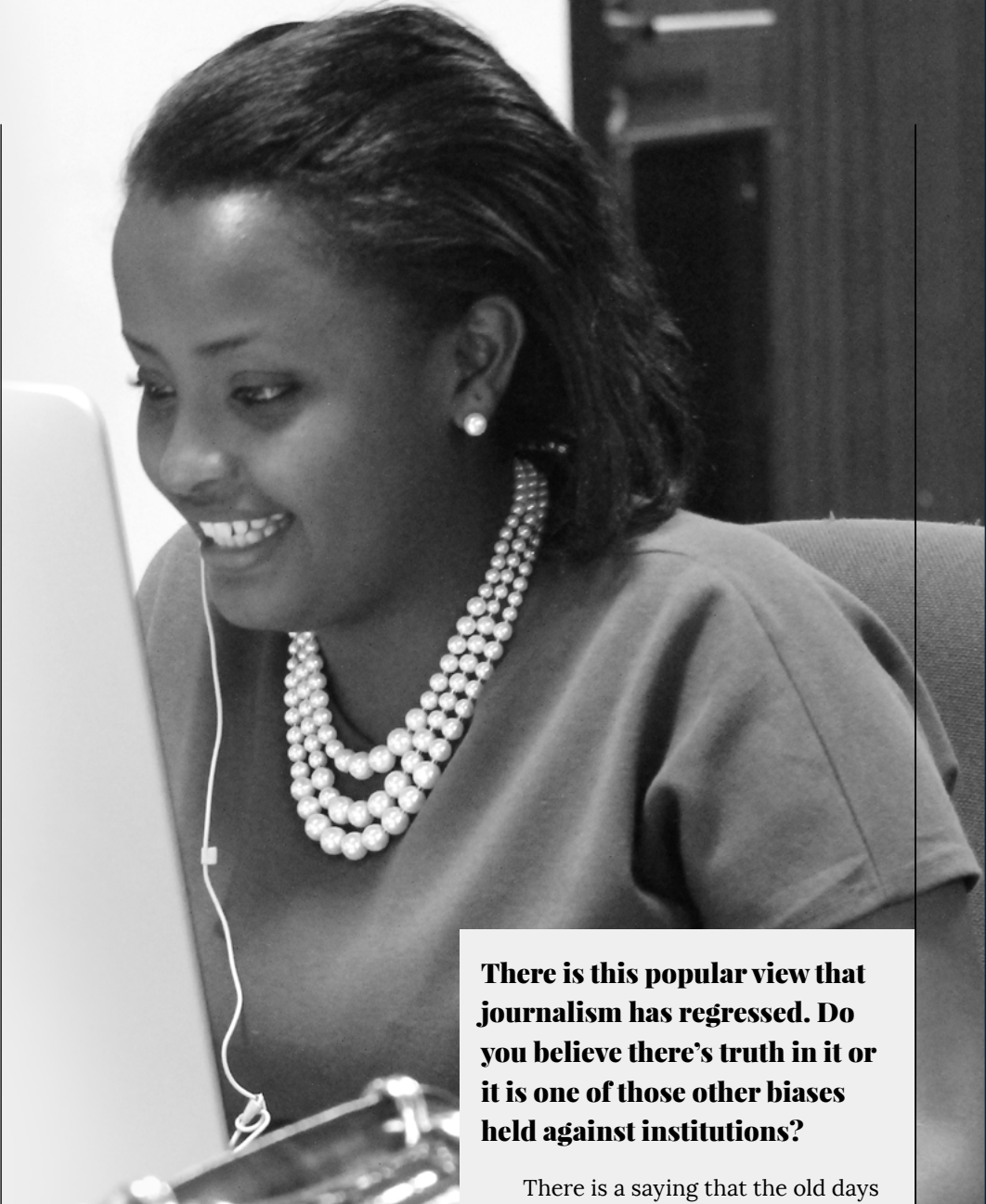
The presidential campaign was an eye opener for me because sometimes you want to get to the bottom of why our leaders do things the way they do them. There are a lot of forces that inform why we have the kind of leaders we have; those you can only see when you are at the frontline like I was. From that experience I noticed that we could, as a country, be going around in circles as regards leadership.

Would you make a transition from broadcast journalism to being a newspaper reporter?

You know, I actually started from print journalism. I had done a bit of freelance journalism for Daily Monitor since first year at University before I trained at the Nation media lab in Nairobi.

When I went to Nairobi for media training, I did training in print, broadcast and multimedia.

When I was exposed to broadcast in Nairobi, I felt my strength was there. I could speak more than I could write. So I decided to take on broadcast journalism. Maybe in future I could try something else but I am happy right now in broadcast.



Credit: Kampala Express/Timothy Kalyegira

There are a lot of forces that inform why we have the kind of leaders we have; those you can only see when you are at the frontline like I was.

There is this popular view that journalism has regressed. Do you believe there's truth in it or it is one of those other biases held against institutions?

There is a saying that the old days are the good old days. Those who are senior in the media industry may be seeing challenges in the kind of writing, publication but I also think we are doing our part as journalists. The only challenge I see is perhaps the influence of social media.

Then, they were at liberty to sleep with a story and go to press the next day but now the story breaks on social media and you are competing with your own audience.

Maybe they are right, but I can only judge what I am seeing now. We are doing our best right now. Plus a lot has changed overtime, the conditions and challenges are different. We will continue to tell stories, to tell the truth. ■



The potent mix of social media and politics



By John Blanshe Musinguzi

The 2016 presidential election will go down in history as the 'social media election'. It was the time when social media exercised its full leverage on electioneering and political discussions right from the time when John Patrick Amama Mbabazi announced his bid for the presidency in June 2015 on video sharing service, YouTube.

Photos and videos of presidential candidates on the campaign trail made rounds on social media before getting into newsrooms. Popular hashtags emerged as politics became the major talk on the platforms. It was hardly surprising when government shut down Facebook and Twitter citing national security threats.

Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) Executive Director Godfrey Mutabazi in a sworn affidavit, defended President Museveni during Mbabazi's election petition. Mutabazi said he received a telephone call from the Inspector General of Police Gen Kale Kayihura in the afternoon of Feb 17, hours to election, who informed him of "an imminent grave security concern by some individuals who wanted to use social media platforms and mobile money facilities to seriously destabilize the security of the country."

However the social media blockade exposed government and how detached it is from the citizenry. Hardly had an hour passed after the ban when thousands were already sharing ideas on using encrypted private networks. It was reported that by the time voting closed on the evening of Feb 18, an astounding 1.5 million Ugandans had already successfully downloaded Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) granting them access to social media, where they lambasted the Electoral Commission for delayed voting and lambasted the government for its hideous attempts to subvert democracy. However, a minor few still remained unable to access the sites.

The blockade did nothing to kill the hashtag #UgandaDecides which had picked momentum as early as November 2015.

Although there are a number of people on social media defending government and the person of Museveni,

the biggest beneficiary of social media in the election season appeared to be the Opposition.

Social media created political dialogue platforms for politicians to sell their manifestos to 'netizens'. For instance Forum for Democratic Change (FDC)'s Kizza Besigye campaign team used social media to expose government's failure: dilapidated schools, hospitals, bad roads, etc as government handlers used the same platforms to show government achievement; ongoing road construction, hospital renovations. It took the power of political messaging away from the mass media and placed it firmly into peer-to-peer, public discourse. Many times battles between Opposition stalwarts and NRM supporters were utter slugfests with the name calling, shaming and blackmail.

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Social media effectiveness

ICT consultant Michael Niyitegeka asserts that social media played minimal roles in the election campaigns and its outcomes. He argues that none of the presidential candidates initiated a strategy to effectively use the platforms. Apart from posting pictures of candidates during campaigns which flooded social media platforms, Niyitegeka says policies and manifesto presented by politicians received no attention.

Makerere University historian Prof. Mwambutsya Ndeebesa says that though social media has become a political instrument for disseminating information, its effectiveness in Uganda's politics needs more studying. However, he refers to Go Forward presidential candidate Amama



Did social media become a security threat on Election Day?

Niyitegeka says government overreacted when it decided to shutdown social media on the voting day. He argues that government decision was based on rumours.

“There is no evidence that social media could have contributed to insecurity on election days,” he says adding that government did not bother to provide evidence in the eyes of ordinary citizens that the platforms were a threat. Niyitegeka is not clear on what government could have done about the threats but nonetheless believes that it should have done better.

Mwambutsya says social media became a threat to the “state not people.” He opines that people could have used social media to report election irregularities orchestrated by the state backing the ruling party. “Government did not want such things like irregularities, intimidation and rigging to be exposed.” He adds that social media became a threat when it facilitated opposition to create organizational infrastructure which they didn’t have.

Social media for development

Niyitegeka says the key to turn social media into a nation building tool is engagement and collectiveness. According to him, government needs to come out and engage its critics. He likened social media to a debate where people get together to express their opinion.

“We need to learn from National Water and Sewage Cooperation (NWSC) because when you report to

Mbabazi who maintained a vibrant presence on social media but did little to grease his political support.

“Yes social media can create awareness and consciousness about political issues but these may not easily translate into legitimacy,” Prof. Mwambutsya opines. “Social media can undermine one candidate and deny him or her political legitimacy in terms of minds being shaped.”

Mwambutsya’s argument is not far-fetched. Journalist and CEO of *The Independent*, Andrew Mwenda, in an article argued that from the beginning of the election campaign, the Museveni team failed to appreciate the communication revolution that has taken place in Uganda since the last elections.

Though, Museveni has the largest following on social media – both Twitter and Facebook, Mwenda says, this worked in favour of Besigye. “How? Whenever Museveni posted something on his Facebook page, Besigye supporters would flood it like a swarm of bees posting criticism and

grotesque insults of the president.”

“Today when someone posts on Twitter or Facebook a message critical of Besigye, his army of fanatics flood it with hundreds of accusations, labels and insults. This creates a feeling of mass support – but the comments will be by 100 angry people,” Mwenda states.

He says many Museveni supporters have withdrawn from social media feeling the world is against their man. “Many others I meet have created proxy accounts in order to protect their real identity from being flooded with hundreds of impassioned insults and accusations.”

Mwenda opines that social media has become a virtual community of like-minded people. “Every big Besigye rally would be posted on Facebook and Whatsapp and reproduced thousands of times, a factor that made it look like they were tens of thousands of rallies. This highly effective, self-organised campaign created an electoral psychology that Besigye had won the election even before balloting began.”

them an issue, the response is instant,” Niyitegeka says.

Since social media platforms aren't easy to control and manage by the state, Mwambutsya says it is a handy tool for political mobilisation, dissemination of information and citizen participation.

“Democracy by citizen participation has been limited by state. Social media has given space for citizens participation and when used effectively it will promote democracy because it will enable people to control the state, disseminate information and hold those in state politically accountable,” he says.

If used deliberately and effectively by the political leaders, Mwambutsya argues that social media will promote political and civic awareness hence promoting democracy in the long run.

Government moots new law

There is no doubt social media added a new dimension to the election and it looks like government is not taking any chances on reining it in. The government has proposed a new bill seeking to remove parliamentary approval of regulations required in implementing the Uganda Communications Act, 2013.

If passed, it means that a minister can issue a decree on social media without a whiff of disapproval from parliament. The consequence of such decrees would mean that government would be going after the citizen journalist; which could mean anyone with a Facebook page or Twitter account.

Edgar Muvunyi Tabaro, a senior lawyer says access to social media is intrinsically related to the right of expression and free speech. “For



Social media has given space for citizens participation and when used effectively it will promote democracy because it will enable people to control the state, disseminate information and hold those in state politically accountable

government to say that there was a security threat is unfortunate, there are provisions in the constitution for government to interfere with people's fundamental rights. Government acted outside the law.”

He argues that there is a need to filter social media content in a bid to stop circulation of “unacceptable and outrageous content from all territories of the world like child pornography content.” Tabaro posits that “to seek to restrict political discourse unless when it does not amount to hate speech is undesirable.”

Critics also suggest that government will have to up its game because controlling the activities of over 12 million Ugandans online will be a Herculean task. ■

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and empowering youth in Uganda



Konrad
Adenauer
Stiftung

The significance of the youth in shaping global affairs is an undoubted fact. In Africa, and particularly in Uganda, the youth are increasingly becoming forerunners in initiatives and actions to redeem and re-focus the future of the continent. Amidst all the positive youth action, there is a growing concern that these youth engagements are both inadequate and unconstructive. This argument is buttressed by the fact that most youth prefer to be engaged in passive activism – as in the case of commenting, liking, retweeting, etc. on social media rather than taking direct action which would spur the much needed socio-economic and political change. Youth have also been engaged in various entrepreneurial initiatives, contributing to Uganda's recent Virgin Group's ranking as the most entrepreneurial country in the world. However, high business mortalities undo these gains as most enterprises perish before celebrating their first birthday.

At KAS Uganda, we aim to reinvigorate the youth and make them constructive agents in socio-economic and political processes. From empowering youth to be active policy formulators and influencers to equipping them with the necessary leadership skills, we are at the forefront of youth participation in Uganda. We do this using a wide array of approaches packaged to offer a comprehensive solution to some of the greatest challenges that continue to riddle youth participation in the affairs that directly affect them.

Our flagship youth policy platform, the Young Leaders Think Tank for Policy Alternatives has been at the forefront for shaping the policy landscape in Uganda for more than five years now. Bringing together a pool of talented and brilliant young minds under one roof, the platform provides a Think & Act Launchpad for influencing and accelerating policy formulation in Uganda. These pools of young leaders have provided a comprehensive analysis of relevant policies in Uganda ranging from agriculture to education and electoral reforms, offering a youth perspective and alternatives. Over the years, many think-tankers have emerged as some of the country's leading policy activists championing the creation of a levelled platform for young people in political and policy processes. Recently, the Think Tank has been actively engaged in understanding the Agenda 2063 which is the African Union flagship agenda for the youth in Africa.

Another significant contribution of KAS towards youth participation is by nurturing their political acumen and leadership skills by University focused youth engagements. For five years now, KAS has partnered with the University Forum

on Governance (UNIFOG) to provide a platform for debates and intellectual engagements like supporting the guild presidential debates to organizing a series of debates and forums focused on multiparty politics to youth cooperation among others. The same approach has now been widened to include other Universities like Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) and Gulu University. For three decades, KAS has supported Action for Development (AcFODE) to empower young female leaders to emerge as the newest breed of leaders in Uganda through programmes like the national youth debating contest and young politician's capacity building initiative.

To contribute towards human capital development among the Ugandan youth, KAS partners with Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) to offer scholarships to over a dozen students each year. To date, this initiative has supported over 100 students to pursue degree programmes in the fields of democracy and human rights, local governance and administration and development. It is worthy to note that some of our alumni are behind multiple social and political action projects in Uganda and beyond, many of them serving in leadership roles at various levels.

With platforms like the Interparty Youth Platform (IYOP) which was birthed by KAS, many young people across the political spectrum have been brought together to address common challenges facing the young people regardless of their political affiliations.

KAS sees engagement with the youth as an investment for the future of Africa. Even with a candid knowledge of a plethora of risks and challenges involved in such investments, we believe that it is a worthwhile investment because the future of Africa rests on the youth. That doesn't mean the older generation has no role to play. In fact they are also quintessential collaborators in this process. As the famous US rapper Common emphasized that creating change "takes young people's energy and wisdom of the elders", we also support initiatives that build the capacity of government officials and civil society actors using various platforms.

Our support to the LéO Africa Institute on this Magazine Project is yet another indication of our commitment to support the youth in Uganda. It is our considered hope that the insights brought forthwith in this first series play an enormous role to recreating the Uganda where youth can thrive and reach their fullest potential.

Donnas Ojok,
Programme Officer, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Uganda

There is a promising innovator in 22-year-old Julius Mugaga

By John Blanshe Musinguzi

In a society where scientists are always grappling with poor pay and deplorable work conditions, there is a 22-year-old Julius Mugaga at Makerere University who has already won awards and received recognition for his innovations and critical thinking.

A third year Bio Medical Engineering student, Mugaga's dream is to become a "game changer in life." The budding scientist hails from Sibukunja in Buikwe District, south eastern Uganda where he was raised by a single mother. His parents separated soon after his birth and his mother refused any aid from his father thus the estrangement. "I like mothers, they don't give up. I grew up only with my mum although my father had the capacity to take me up. My mum is a poor woman but very strong, I must say," Mugaga says.

It was hence the effort of his mother and her relatives that saw him through school. At school, every teacher wanted him in their class because of his good academic performance. After Primary Seven, which he attended in five different UPE schools, life stabilized a bit when his father, a well-established businessman in Kampala appeared in his life and took the responsibility to pay his school fees.

Mugaga studied O' Level at Our Lady of Consolata Secondary School, Kireka where he always topped his class. The continued excellent performance thrilled his father who promised to take Mugaga to a school of his choice. For A-Level, Mugaga joined St. Mary's Kitende in Entebbe where he offered Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Economics. He scored 23 points and was admitted at Makerere University on government scholarship.

Hopitrack, my first innovation

At university, Mugaga joined a group of coursemates with whom they would hold academic discussions. Among the things they did was start up projects. He explains; "We brainstormed on different ideas which included an x-ray machine and an automated wheelchair."

Mugaga's idea to ease hospital operations made it beyond the group experimentation. He named his innovation HopiTrack. "The idea was that there is an app at the centre where everything is done. A patient just reports to the centre and they are told which doctor is in what section, where different equipment is located, which doctor is on duty and who is absent."

It wasn't received with as much enthusiasm as he hoped, until he presented it at the College of Health Science first Bio-Medical Engineering Conference. It elicited a lot of questions and comments.

After the presentation, he was approached by Universities Together Empowering Development (UNITED) a global organizer for students' social action who praised the project. UNITED is an initiative of Oxford University students and has an office at Makerere University.

He worked on a prototype, a brief demonstration of the project that could track about 10 people's reports about their movement and location. He presented the project to Consortium for Affordable Medical Technologies (CAMTech Uganda) based at Mbarara University of Science and Technology.

CAMTech is a global network of academic, clinical, corporate and implementation partners working to accelerate high-quality, affordable medical technology development for low and middle income countries.

He also presented it to Resilient Africa Network (RAN).

Mugaga's project was appreciated but he was informed that it necessitated huge finances, which unfortunately became a recurring response. Mugaga says the university went ahead to document the project, although it has never facilitated any of his endless travels in search for more funding to develop the app. Mainly due to financial constraints, Mugaga has paused the project.

Prototype project nonetheless won 2015 Mak Varsity Innovative Award of the year which came with a free air ticket to a country of his choice. More importantly, the win boosted his confidence and made him believe he could actually impact society.

FistApp, another breakthrough

In the meantime, Mugaga is not fazed as he continues to indulge his creative juices. Early 2015, he came up with the FistApp, which he explains as "a unique equation that relates the causes of obstructed labour and the risk of pregnancy". The model takes into account a number of factors including blood pressure, anaemia results, age, birth history, the number of children a woman has produced and determines their impact during the pregnancy.

"The equation is put in the code of an app and when the factors that can obstruct pregnancy are filled in," Mugaga explains, "the computation that comes out is the percentage, I call it 'percentage risk' that informs a doctor on how much care to take with a specific expectant mother."

Mugaga reasons that eliminating fistula could help lower maternal deaths due to fistula, which is caused by obstructed labour.



The FistApp project won the most innovative concept award at the African Bio-Medical Engineering Consortium (ABEC)

Mugaga's goal is to develop FistApp into a simple app that operates with the aid of a cellphone, a device affordable to most Ugandans today. "Smart phones are expensive but I am sure there is no hospital that cannot afford a smartphone. Even for a small health centre, a smartphone is a gadget the government can provide," he argues, optimistic about the future of his innovation. He says he started the project alone but brought on board fellow students Adam Musoke, Vincent Atezyayo and Marvin Kiseka.

The FistApp project won the most innovative concept award at the African Bio-Medical Engineering Consortium (ABEC) in Ethiopia's capital Addis-Ababa in January this year.

He says after winning Mak Varsity Awards, he received an email from

Oxford University inviting him to a conference when OxMak students visit Oxford this year. After the Addis Ababa competition, Mugaga received another email inviting him for the conference with a promise for funding this time round. "I thought to myself, 'Yeah! My dream is coming true!'" Mugaga chortles.

The plan

Mugaga's ultimate aspiration is to become "a game changer of life, and a dependable person in terms of professionalism and skills." The young scientist's chief aim is to first accomplish the FistApp project. "The African Bio-Medical Engineering Consortium (ABEC) division seeks to see this project become a product too," he says, full of hope. ■

I am not intimidated by anyone

- Taaka



On a sunny Monday afternoon, March 21, 2016, I met Susan Taaka, a 29-year-old traffic police constable by rank as she executed her duties at Wandegeya roundabout traffic lights. Taaka joined Uganda Police in 2010. We chatted about her work experience. Below are excerpts of the interview.

At what time are you supposed to report to work and at what time are you supposed to leave?

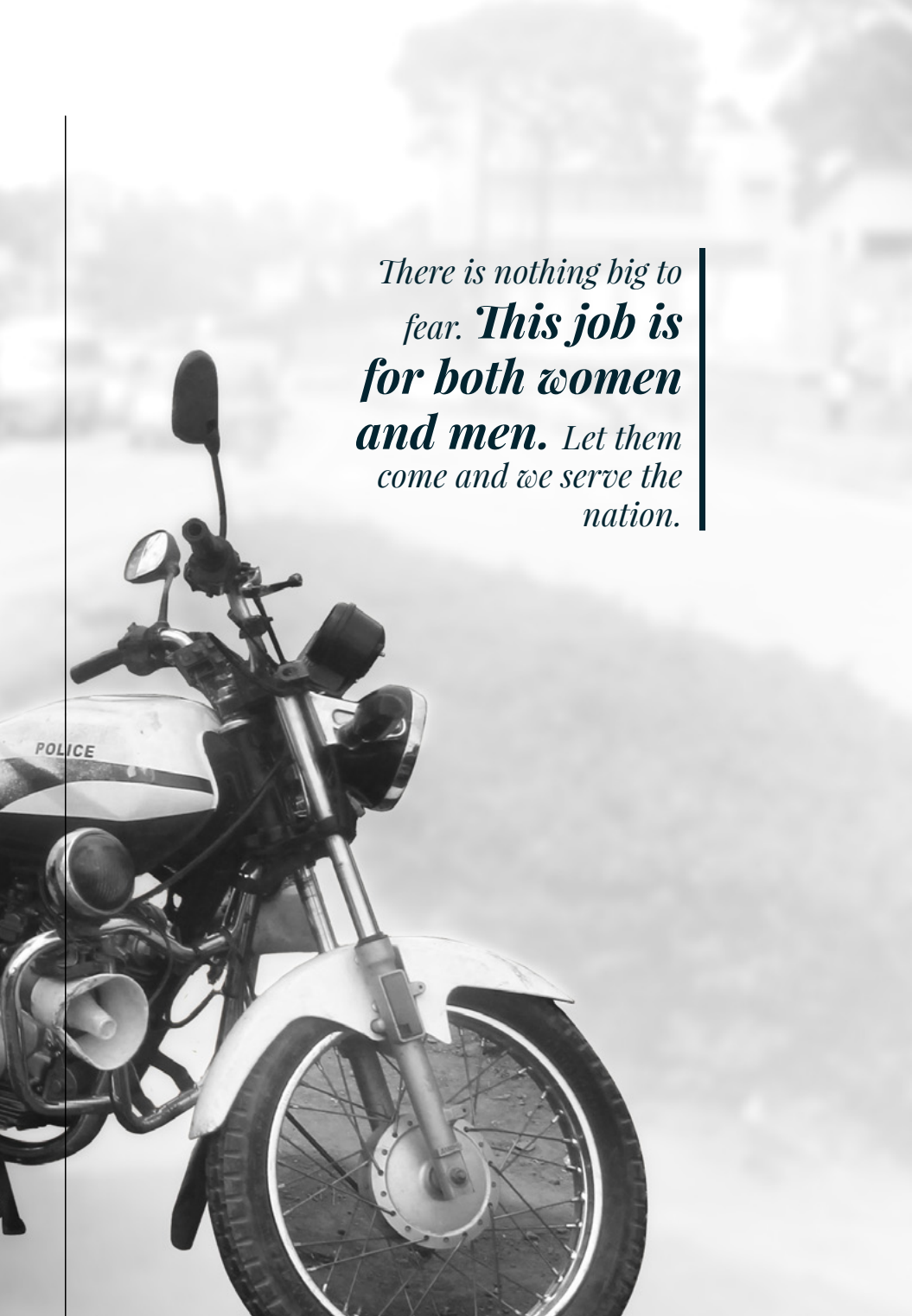
I have to report at 6:00AM and leave work depending on the point that I am working at. Like here at the traffic lights (Wandegeya), I leave at 6:00PM. At other points, I work from 6:00AM to 2:00PM. Then others, I work from 8:00AM to 9:00PM.

Which points in Kampala do you usually work at?

I work at all points in Kampala because they deploy per week. For instance, if I work here this week, I will be deployed at another point next week.

What has been your experience in your traffic policing career?

I have got knowledge because many times we get challenges and make mistakes but we are always advised. We get to learn more. Also, I have got many friends.



*There is nothing big to fear. **This job is for both women and men.** Let them come and we serve the nation.*

Point out some of the challenges?

Some of the challenges are with our drivers. Some drivers, most of them don't know what to do on roads. When you find them in fault and you try to put them right, they don't want to be advised. It's until you report them to higher authorities that they understand the mistakes and apologise.

By John
Blanshe
Musinguzi

Do you ever feel disrespected by some of the drivers?

Yes, there are drivers who feel they are big. They look at me as a small woman. They drive expensive cars but when they make mistakes and I stop them, they undermine me by saying "How can a small woman stop me?" And indeed we have to do it whether you are driving an expensive car or not. As long as you are out of law, we have to put you right. Nobody is above the law.

What would you tell women who want to join the Police and be like you?

I just encourage women that there is nothing impossible if you are a human being. We should always work hard. Challenges are there but when you get a problem, you explain to your bosses and they understand and give time to sort it out. But there is nothing like this or that work is for a woman or man. And there is nothing intimidating.

How about those who fear to join the police?

My advice is that let them come and we work. There is nothing big to fear. This job is for both women and men. Let them come and we serve the nation. This job is for all men and women.

Are you married?

Yes

How do you balance family issues and work?

Like a woman, I have to be a woman at home and at work. And my husband has to understand me also. When I reach home I become a house wife. I have to do house work. When I am on duty, I am on duty and my husband has to understand it that am on duty. So he knows and endures it.

>>The Next Economic Crisis Isn't Coming – It Has Arrived



By Eshban Kwesiga

Economists have a thing they call the “demographic dividend,” a fancy term to mean a rapidly growing youth population which can be an opportunity for economic boom especially when the bulk of its young people are of a working age in comparison to dependents. This is now being made in reference to Africa.

Before you read any further, it might help to start with a little bit of blunt honesty; a rapidly growing youth population is not an opportunity of any kind especially if you have no jobs to absorb all the young people eligible to work as is the case in Uganda and many African countries today. The World Bank places Uganda’s youth unemployment rate at 80% but the Uganda government says it is 62%, whichever statistic you choose to look at – it doesn’t look good.

Despite Africa’s continued economic progress and it’s growing Africa Rising narrative (that many of us and especially myself like to champion) the truth is that today the continent has

more unemployed young people than at any other time in our history with many of them living in urban centers thereby increasing the likelihood of them slipping into crime or becoming homeless.

If you live in Uganda, you have probably heard most politicians, technocrats, bureaucrats, economists, academics, social and political commentators talk about the youth unemployment and every time dropping rhetoric, platitudes and statistics (like I just did a few moments ago) so I will spare you the statistics except for this single one; according to a combined report by DFID, UKAID and the Youth Working Group, to solve Uganda’s current youth unemployment crisis,

the country would need 600,000 new jobs every year for the next 12 years.

With the exception of public sector employers such as the military and general public service, Uganda’s biggest employer is the Madhvani Group, a multi-sector conglomerate that has been around for over 102 years. With interests in energy, consumer goods, financial services, construction, sugar, tea, communication, horticulture, software, hotels and resorts, the group employs about 10,000 people.

To put this into perspective, Uganda would need 60 companies the size of the Mahdvani Group every year for the next 12 years.

On a global scale, global brands such as Toyota employ over 300,000 people across the world, again, this would mean that for Uganda to address the youth unemployment crisis, it would need two companies the size of Toyota setting up within Uganda every year for the next 12 years and employing strictly Ugandans.

Given this information, it’s fair to assert that Uganda’s youth unemployment crisis has become so colossal and may probably not be resolved within my lifetime. The next economic crisis isn’t coming, it is already here.

Business Owners Do Not Create Jobs

One of the biggest misconceptions about job creation is that jobs are created by business owners, yet in reality most business owners will confess that creating a job is a thing they do as a measure of last resort when they are unable to supply a product or meet its demand on their own.

For example, a man sets up a shop and he gets 10 walk-in customers



every hour, at the start he is doing fine by himself and able to adequately attend to all his 10 customers every hour. At this point he has absolutely no reason to hire an extra person because he can manage all the work by himself. However, after the business starts to grow, demand for his product increases, he now gets 50 customers every hour and is unable to attend to all of them at ago by himself. So he does the next logical thing, he hires an extra person or two to work in the shop thereby assisting him with meeting the demand from his customers and eventually proving the point that – business owners do not create jobs out of the kindness of their hearts, but rather because an increased demand compels them to employ extra people if they cannot supply the product with the workforce presently available to them.

In many ways, this also proves; the consumers that create demand for a product are the actual job creators because they are essentially compelling business owners to hire more labour that contributes to producing

On a global scale, global brands such as Toyota employ over 300,000 people across the world, again, this would mean that for Uganda to address the youth unemployment crisis, it would need two companies the size of Toyota setting up within Uganda every year for the next 12 years and employing strictly Ugandans.

more of the products or services that are already in demand.

So anybody that attempts to create jobs in any sector must clearly think through how to increase consumer demand in that sector. To create jobs in the local manufacturing sector one must first create demand for locally manufactured products, the same principle applies for all other sectors. Also, to create jobs in the local textile industry, one must first create demand for local textile products because it's the increased demand that compels business owners to hire extra labour.

Enter Protectionism

All governments have the power to instantly create demand for locally produced goods and services however hard this always is.

The most practical and immediate way to increase demand for local goods is to enforce selective protectionism on goods making them expensive to import thereby creating a state of urgency within the country, forcing the existing business community of traders and importers to forge a structure of cottage industries and eventually major manufacturing houses that will create jobs.

However for protectionism to work, government has to make a number of considerations, these include; developing a careful selection of the goods that will be covered under the protectionism policy – in some cases raising the import taxes of those imported goods to 20% or even higher to discourage imports and in some cases simply abolishing all importation of some goods.

The selected goods must be products that can be easily produced

within Uganda using minimal machinery such as packaged agricultural products, door handles, soft drinks, candles, tailored clothes (not textile rolls), wooden furniture etc. As an extension of protectionism, bans may be placed on the importation of specific electronic appliances but not their parts such as a ban on the importation of flat irons or air conditioners but not their assembling parts. Some air conditioning companies already offer this service to importers as a measure for tax burden reduction that would allow the importation of non-taxable air conditioning parts that are later easily assembled when they arrive in the country of destination.

However, here is why it's easier written about than done; protectionism by its very nature creates scarcity of specific goods, which may cause inflation, so the government that enforces protectionism has to be ready for some backlash from the public. Because of the initial public resistance against protectionism policies, it's critical that any government that implements it does so in the early years of a presidency, the public backlash from scarcity of goods and inflation may become so much that it will shake the political capital and popularity of any government forcing it to go back on its protectionism policy in the years approaching an election year, especially if the protectionism has been unable to create enough jobs to guarantee public support towards government.

Outside the country, free trade activists are likely to attack the policy as being anti-free trade and a hindrance to the 21st century globalization. Despite this, it's important to consider that countries across the world still practice protectionism to some level; they have just become good at dressing it with different names and pretending they are not



...the government that enforces protectionism has to be ready for some backlash from the public.

doing it. In China, the state television network CCTV does not broadcast animations made out of China for the sole reason of creating jobs for the animation industry in China.

In 2012 when Brazil (the world's fourth largest market for imported vehicles) wanted to create demand for the locally manufactured car industry, the country raised taxes on imported vehicles by 30%. The end result was that importing a vehicle became so expensive. In the first six months, Chinese vehicle exports to Brazil fell by almost 90 percent year-on-year, taking Brazil out of the top 10 export destinations for Chinese automobiles but also prompting Chinese manufacturers to set up an assembly plant in Brazil to create jobs for Brazilians.

Many times Heads of State and government policy makers constantly

have to choose amongst a number of lesser evils. As an overall philosophy, the protectionism policy will always face resistance from free trade activists as well as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and that's why it must be presented as high taxes on imports under the pretext of the pursuit for increased government revenue but with its end game being to create demand for local products and eventually creating jobs for Ugandans. Maybe then will Uganda's youth unemployment crisis be resolved within our lifetime. ■

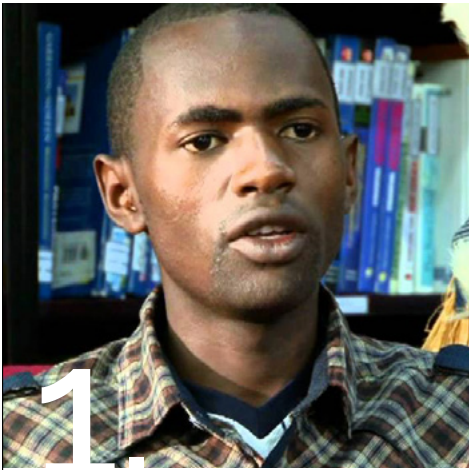
Eshban Kwesiga is the Programmes Officer at Parliament Watch Uganda.

TOP EAST AFRICANS under 30

Meet the youngsters paving the way in East Africa

By James Ronald Awany and Ian Katusiime

Across Africa and the world, young people are making tremendous strides in business, leadership and innovation. In spite of endemic problems like corruption, ineffective political leadership and inadequate funding for various socio-economic programs across East Africa, some young people are taking the mantle and filling the vacuum left by the older generation. These individuals are not world beaters but they are going out of their way to be the change they desire to see. In no particular order, we look at individuals under the age of 30 who are making a difference with solutions to everyday life through their infant companies and novel ideas.



Joel Mwale, 22

Founder, Skydrop Enterprises, Kenya

Mwale is a 22 year old like no other. He has sold a company at half a million dollars and discoursed with Heads of State. While most 16 year olds were fussing over video games and adulating over music stars, he was founding his first company; SkyDrop Enterprises. The company produced purified low-cost drinking water and helped to reduce on the water problem in rural communities in Kenya. After a few years, he sold SkyDrop at \$500,000 to Israeli investors at a time it employed over 70 people. The next venture for this school drop-out was Gigavia, a platform that integrates education, mentorship and social media. Mwale's aim is to reduce on the cost and burden of online education both teachers and students suffer.



Jean Bosco Nzeyimana, 22

CEO of Habona Ltd Rwanda

Nzeyimana is the founder and CEO of Habona Ltd – a company that produces affordable and environmentally friendly products in form of biogas, briquettes and organic fertilizers in Rwanda. This graduate of Business Administration from the University of Rwanda was also selected as a 2015 Mandela Washington Fellow, an initiative by US president Barack Obama for Young African Leaders to impart business knowledge and enhance leadership skills. In 2014, he flew to Atlanta, USA where he was a panellist alongside Rwandan President Paul Kagame at an event to mark Rwanda Day celebrations. In the same year in February, he volunteered as Acting Head of Capacity Building Department for BIOCOOP Rwanda, a Youth Cooperative committed to biodiversity conservation, Ecotourism Promotion, hygiene and sanitation, community health, and environmental management and protection for sustainable development.



Damotila Silayo, 24

Founder Jathropa Soap Production, Tanzania

Domitila Silayo is the founder of Jathropa Soap Production in Tanzania, which produces handmade soap with medicinal uses. She hatched the idea from a cultural festival she attended in 2012. Silayo discovered the secret of the Jathropa plant's cosmetic value and its ability to relieve ailments such as ring worm, eczema and dandruff. It helped that Jathropa is a common plant in Tanzania. Oil from the plant seeds is what Silayo uses to make soap. In an interview, she revealed people do not rush for products from small companies like hers in preference for established brands but she has soldiered on and now sells more than 1,000 bars of soap monthly.



Mubarak Muyika, 25

Founder Hype Centuries Technology, Kenya

Orphaned at the tender age of 11, Muyika taught himself website designing skills and later set up a website for his adoptive parents who ran a bookshop in Nairobi. Due to his other love of entrepreneurship, Muyika turned down a fully paid scholarship at Harvard University in 2012 to concentrate on his dream of setting up a computer business. He soon established Hype Centuries Technology, a web designing and domain registration outfit which also currently does online marketing. More doors later opened for the young man. In 2012, he entered into a partnership with an Indian investor who run I-Code Ltd which brought in countless domains. Shortly after, Muyika started Zagace, a provider of customized business solutions containing apps that have Enterprise Resource Planning capability.



Davis Musinguzi, 29

Director of Medical Concierge Group, Uganda

Musinguzi is a medical doctor with interests in digital health. He manages The Medical Concierge Group (TMCG) that operates Uganda's first 24/7 medical call centre service and provides premium technology solutions to healthcare organisations and projects. This young doctor has banished stereotypes held about medics by innovating, establishing a unique business model which has since earned him awards like the 2015 Social Innovation in Health Award at the University of Oxford and University of Cape Town, Google Africa Connected Award in 2014 among others. Musinguzi has worked as a consultant on Uganda's e-health and m-health policy frameworks including UNICEF and other community organisations. In 2012, Musinguzi was the first runner up of Inspire Africa, a leadership competition reality TV show in Kampala, a feat many thought he deserved due to his creative abilities.



Larry Madowo, 28

NTV Kenya Anchor and Technology Editor, Kenya

Madowo was raised by a single mother in Siaya, south Western Kenya who struggled to educate both him and his sister. Now a popular media personality in Kenya, Madowo says he is constantly motivated by his mother's hard work to push him through life. He started out as an intern anchor on Bahasha FM after joining Daystar University. A year later in 2007, he dropped out of university to take a job at Kenya Television Network where he became Business Editor. Since then, Madowo has risen through the ranks and worked at CNBC Africa and then eventually back to NTV Kenya. He writes a weekly column for Daily Nation. Madowo also hosts a popular Friday night lifestyle show #TheTrend on NTV that has made him a household name in Kenya. From a small schoolboy in Kenya, Madowo is now a globe-trotting media personality hosting conferences on themes of media and technology with a huge following of 729,000 Twitter followers.



Best Ayiorwoth, 23

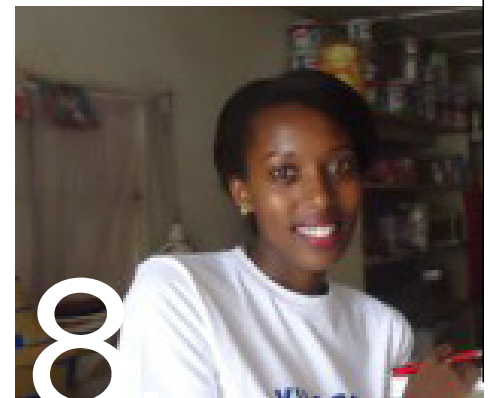
Founder, GIPOMO, Uganda

In northern Uganda, many children drop out of school and lose hope. However a few use this experience to turn their life around. Ayiorwoth is one such example. Born in Nebbi, Ayiorwoth dropped out of school after losing both parents. When push came to shove, she moved to Kampala at 17 and acquired some vocational skills. With a few savings she had made from working at a restaurant, she went back to Nebbi and founded Girls Power Micro Lending Organisation (GIPOMO). She started by giving out soft loans to women running small businesses. Her main aim was to support women who promise to keep their girls in school. Currently, GIPOMO has helped over 100 women start business and kept close to 200 girls in school. A few years after starting GIPOMO, she won a Shs1m cash prize from FINA Africa Business Enterprise Business Challenge and the Anshiza Prize which brought her a cool \$25,000. This enabled her to scale up her operations at GIPOMO and also launch an Education for Girls Fund to facilitate secondary school education.

Chantal Butare, 22

Founder, Kinazi Dairy Cooperative (KIDACO) Rwanda

Butare is a young entrepreneur passionate about empowering women and the most vulnerable people in the rural communities of Rwanda. In 2012, she started KIDACO (Kinazi Dairy Cooperative) to help genocide survivors access markets in their communities. Under the Girinka programme in Rwanda, genocide survivors are given cows as a form of government assistance. It is from here that Butare formed KIDACO to engage her passion. The organization buys milk from the women, processes it and sells it to consumers. Currently, the initiative has expanded to serve more than 3000 farmers in Rwanda and Burundi.



Catherine Mahugu, 28

Co-Founder, Soko, Kenya

Catherine Mahugu, a University of Nairobi graduate in Computer Science is known as a co-founder of Soko, an online platform where shoppers can buy handcrafted accessories made in developing countries, something which has helped to connect global markets. She is also notable for her accomplishments in ICT such as her involvement in ICT for Development projects including Stanford University and Nokia Africa Research Center Design Projects focused on building mobile applications targeting informal communities. Mahugu also founded Sasa Africa, an e-platform that connects mobile enabled artisans to consumers online. She is an International Telecom Union (ITU) Young Innovators fellow. ITU is the UN specialized agency for information and communication technologies.



Kelvin Macharia Kuria, 25

CEO, Sunrise Tracking, Kenya

Kuria is the founder of Sunrise Tracking, a Nairobi-based firm that offers top of the range solutions for both vehicles and buildings. The range of services includes car tracking, CCTV surveillance and fleet management. With a simple text, the company can track a stolen vehicle and halt its movement. A year after starting in 2011, Sunrise had more than 100 customers and in 2014, was being valued at an astonishing \$100,000. This student of Bachelors of Commerce at University of Nairobi serves as a mentor on Wings to Fly, a scholarship program by Equity Group Foundation in Kenya. In 2015, Kuria attended the YALI Fellowship in Washington DC. To add on his numerous accolades, the Africa Youth Awards held in Ghana crowned him Young Entrepreneur of the Year in 2015.



George Mtemahanji, 22

Co-founder SunSweet Solar, Tanzania

Mtemahanji is not just passionate about low cost clean energy but he believes he can use it to foster African innovation. His involvement with low cost energy started way back when he was in high school. At a time when new Tanzanian President John Pombe Magufuli is preaching austerity, Mtemahanki could not have found a more willing partner for his projects. After graduating in 2012 as a renewable energy technician, he founded Sun Sweet Solar Ltd, a solar energy company that designs solar powered systems and imports solutions for solar energy techniques and materials at low cost. His vision is to install 10,000 systems in rural areas over the five years to save trees and promote energy conservation.



Isaac Oboth, 26

Founder, Media 256, Uganda

Isaac Oboth runs Media 256 LTD, a Kampala-based film and television production company he founded after quitting university in 2010. Oboth once sold rock buns, pork and beer to make ends meet as a nine year old. He told BBC in a recent interview that he is a "profit making film-maker" and works hard to realise this. The dreadlocked Oboth is also a lecturer at Artfield Institute, a design school in Kampala where he tutors in digital video, visual fix and motion graphics. He got his big break as a video producer when Ethiopian Commodities Exchanges hired him to do a short film. Since then he has taken on clients like Aqua Sipi, USAID, UNDP and The African Leadership Network. In 2011, he won the Young African Achievers Award for Film and Television.

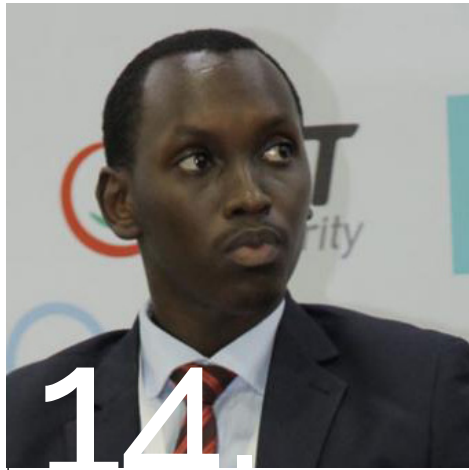




Noah Walakira, 22

Owner, Namirembe Sweater Makers, Uganda

Born in Mengo, Kampala, Walakira was already earning a living at the tender age of 15 when he started Namirembe Sweater Makers. He started in a small room in 2008 where he taught his brothers and friends the art of knitting after a brief stint of knitting in a local warehouse. Today, he employs his mother and four other people and also boasts of 12 sweater making machines. The company is currently partnering with over 50 schools and 3 other companies. In 2013, he diversified and started selling clothes to security companies and petrol stations since schools were his main clients. Walakira ignored the snide remarks about knitting being girly work and now earns steady income and takes care of some of his siblings.



Patrick Buchana, 24

CEO, AC GROUP, Rwanda

Buchana is the CEO and Vice Chairman of AC Group Ltd, a technology company that deployed the Tap&Go smart transport solution for the Rwandan public transport. With this, people pay for bus services with the simple swipe of a card. His dream is to see more digital products used to complete transactions and ultimately turn Kigali into a bustling metropolis as part of the Rwanda Vision 2020 Goals. Kigali Bus Services noticed the ingenuity of his company and now 30,000 people in the city are cardholders for this service. The program was launched under the auspices of Smart Kigali, a plan to modernize the city. In July 2015, Buchana, a graduate of Kigali Institute of Technology, was named Innovator of the Year.



Gisele Iradukunda, 23

Founder, Radio Gare, Rwanda

Rwanda is renowned for its advancement of women in various sectors. Iradukunda seems to be a product of this development. She is the founder of Radio Gare project, a company that installs radio speakers in bus stations. A number of companies have jumped on board to use her services to advertise their goods and services. Iradukunda's first station was Nyamata, a small town in southeast Rwanda, after which she acquired a loan and spread her wings to two more stations. Her goal is to service stations in the whole country. She has also enlisted the services of health practitioners to share vital information on healthy living through broadcasts.

Stephen Sembuya, 29

Co-founder, Pink Food Industries, Uganda

Sembuya is a co-founder and CEO of Pink Food Industries, a company that produces chocolate and other confectioneries in Kampala. Uganda is far from being a cocoa producer in the league of Ivory Coast, but with his 286 hectare plantation in Mukono, Sembuya alongside his partner, Felix Osike, plans to turn Uganda into a cocoa haven. The farm employs 100 farmers and can produce at least 80kg a day. Sembuya and his partner plan to fill the shelves of Ugandan supermarkets with their chocolate as they also receive orders from countries like Kenya, Egypt Britain, Turkey etc. The duo uses social media to promote their product among Kampala's rapidly growing middle class. Sembuya is a scion of a wealthy industrial family in Uganda that used to operate steel plants.





Joie Laurent Sangwa, 22

Founder, Domestic Biogas Use Promotion Project, Rwanda

Sangwa found a way of putting human waste to good use. She turned an otherwise sanitation hazard into an energy solution. All this was made possible by a constant need by Rwandans for cheap and renewable energy resources. Through her Domestic Biogas Use Promotion project, Sangwa has cut back on the scale of deforestation, helped families spend less on power and has also been recognized for her "green" efforts.



Barclay Paul Okari, 26

CEO Impact Africa Industries, Kenya

Okari is the proprietor of Impact Africa Industries, a Kenyan company which manufactures affordable sanitary pads and baby diapers. He set up the company in 2011 to cater for rural women in Western Kenya but now serves across East Africa. Okari also recently started Kopa Ventures, a financial technology company with innovations that ease up on the bureaucracy of accessing loans.



Linda Kwamboka, 27

Co-Founder MFarm, Kenya

Kwamboka is part of the tech movement that is swirling in Kenya. This hands-on lady is a Business Information graduate from Strathmore University, she founded M-Farm in 2010 to equip rural farmers with knowledge about market prices, suppliers and buyers. Her mission was to eliminate the role of manipulative middle men who eat into the profits of small scale farmers in rural communities. Her business skills were partly honed at Strathmore where she headed the Student Enterprise Program.



Ali-shah Jivraj, 28

CEO, Royal Electronics, Uganda

Jivraj is an Asian Ugandan businessman and Chief Executive Officer of Royal Electronics Limited, a Kampala-based business that rakes in close to \$15m in annual revenue. Like many in the Asian business community in Uganda, Jivraj assembles and distributes electronics like television sets, radios, DVD players and speakers. This third generation Asian-Ugandan entrepreneur also runs a real estate company developing plush residential properties in Kampala. Jivraj's grandfather, a businessman, Merali Jivraj fled Uganda after then President Idi Amin expelled Indians from the country. The elder Jivraj was one of the wealthiest people in the country and was involved in the import business. Amin's decree scattered the family haphazardly but the family name is being rebuilt through this dynamic and fresh faced entrepreneur who is establishing his own empire.

Why Uganda needs stable power for its small businesses

By John Blanshe Musinguzi

Mustafa Kigozi, 32, owns a small metal welding shop in Bwaise, a Kampala city suburb. He has been in the business for the last four years. From this metal fabrication business, Kigozi is able to cater for his family and parents back home in Masaka. He is not planning to get a white collar job in the future. He is not educated.

This business is heavily dependent on electricity. To Mustafa, cheap and reliable electricity is a prerequisite for his business. Certainly, many Ugandans run small scale businesses like those of Kigozi.

To fabricate a metallic window, he needs between 15 to 20 electricity units and between 15 and 30 units for a metallic door depending on its type. Each unit costs Shs604.7 per month. He pays between Shs200,000 and 300,000 for power.

Kigozi blames UMEME for the intermittent tariffs. He recalls a scenario when power charges increased by 17.4% on average in October 2015 yet his customers could not bear the increase in price of his products.

For domestic consumers, tariffs nearly increased by 20% and this

meant they had to pay Shs667.4 per unit from Shs558.4. Commercial consumers saw their rate jump by 18.9 per cent to Shs604.6. Tariffs for medium industrial users surged by 17.4 per cent to Shs577.1 while large industries - after intense lobbying - saw their rate rise by 15.9 per cent to Shs386.1 and street lights at Shs630.1

“When power tariffs increase, customers can’t allow me to increase prices of windows or doors. They always want stable prices,” he says. He feels betrayed whenever power tariffs increase. Kigozi is just one of the many who feel disrupted by the circus of power tariffs.

Manufacturers led by Amos Nzeyi met with the Prime Minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda in a bid to dissuade government from increasing

power tariffs though their plea did not yield much.

However, Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) Consumer and Public Affairs Manager Julius Wandera argues that power tariffs are ever fluctuating on a quarterly basis but consumers only complain when charges go up but don’t speak when they plummet.

Why power tariffs increase

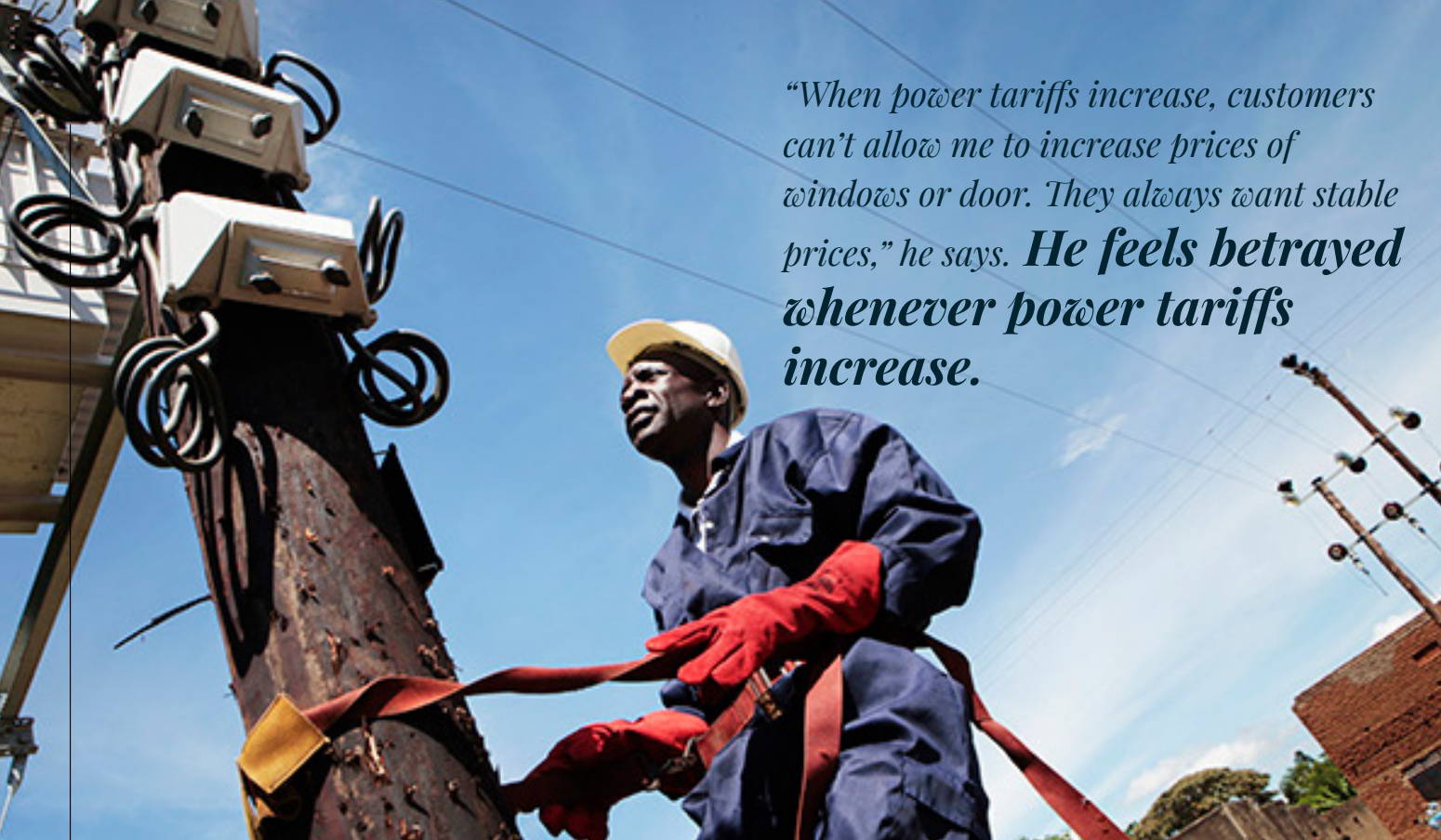
According to a statement explaining the power tariff increment shown to this writer, the latest charges were due to inflation and operation-maintenance costs.

“Uganda shilling has appreciated by 8.2 per cent against the US dollar, from Shs3,658.4 used in determination of the tariffs for the fourth quarter of 2015 to Shs3,357.1 in November 2015,” the statement reads. “UMEME limited operation and maintenance costs have increased from US\$ 46.186 million in 2015 to US\$ 47.678 million in 2016. The operation and maintenance of Uganda Electricity Transmission Company has increased from Shs46,327 million in 2015 to Shs50,370 million in 2016.”

Wandera says macro-economic factors such as the dollar rate have a lot of sway in the dynamics of the electricity sector.

“These increments you keep seeing are a result of Uganda shilling which keeps getting weak. He explains that government purchases power from investors in dollars. “If you need 20 dollars to buy power from Agha Khan per month, his dollars will still be the same. You will need a lot of shillings to pay Agha Khan.”

Every year companies dealing in electricity including Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited, UMEME limited, Electricity



“When power tariffs increase, customers can’t allow me to increase prices of windows or door. They always want stable prices,” he says. He feels betrayed whenever power tariffs increase.

Generation Company limited and Electricity Transmission, Distribution limited submit their budget for review by Electricity Regulatory Authority.

“We sit down with them to justify the costs and ask them to justify the costs,” Wandera says. “We give them what we think will help them do the work not what they wish. We don’t grant what they wish.”

Grand Plans

Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited (UETCL), one of the three successor companies created from the un-bundling of Uganda Electricity Board (UEB) with the mandate to own, develop and operate the High Voltage Transmission Grid (HVTG) is working on ambitious plans.

According to the company’s corporate business plan (2014-2018), UETCL is working on achieving “the country’s Vision to achieve 100% National Electricity Access by 2035... plans to increase per capita electricity consumption to 588KWh by 2020 and

3,668 KWh by 2040.”

Currently Uganda has a short-term surplus situation, but the rapidly growing demand (10% p.a.) will overturn this status if no new power generation is commissioned in tandem, the plan notes.

In 2014 when the corporate business plan was released, Uganda’s peak power system demand stood at “500 MW against an installed generation capacity of 851.53 MW with a firm capacity of 496 MW” that varied in accordance with the prevailing hydrological conditions. Uganda’s electricity consumption stood at 90 kWh per capita in 2012.

The national electrification is still at a lowly 14%.

In its corporate business plan of 2014-2018, the company is targeting to increase power generation capacity by an additional 2,500 MW in 2020, the transmission grid to a total of 2,750km, the highest transmission voltage raised to 220 kV and 400 kV, and the transmission losses reduced to about 3.2%.

The combined transmission and distribution losses are expected to reduce to 16%. Government plans to achieve the required 41,738 MW by the year 2040.

Respite for consumers

In early April, there was a sigh of relief when ERA slashed the end user retail tariff by 1.5% for the next three months. The cut was attributed to the appreciation of the shilling and continued decline in oil prices.

However, experts argue that government needs to do more to scale up Uganda’s industries. On the other hand, government officials have been saying the electricity consumers will not have to worry anymore about tariffs once Karuma and Isimba become operational around 2018. However recent reports about shoddy work and negligence coming from Uganda’s biggest hydro-power project are not something to be optimistic about.

Serenity in Semliki

Uganda Kobs, buffalos and a luxurious lodge leave visitors in awe at the reserve

By Ian Katusiime

One thing that stands out about Semliki Wildlife Reserve is its numerous bird species numbering over 450 and huge concentration of Uganda Kobs in its sprawling trees and vast open savannah grassland. After a four-hour journey from Kampala, I arrived in Fort Portal on a drizzly Friday afternoon en route to Semliki. One of the oldest conservation areas in Uganda, the Semliki Wildlife Reserve is located in Western Uganda in Ntoroko District, off the Fort Portal-Bundibugyo Road. Located in the Western Rift Valley, bordered to the North by Lake Albert and surrounded by Rwenzori Mountains, the reserve became a hub for game hunting when it was created in 1929.

As one makes their way into Semliki, the sight of the graceful Ugandan Kobs in herds prancing around the grassland, fleeing from moving vehicles is one you

cannot miss. There are over 13, 000 Kobs in the reserve and this national symbol is one of the main attractions at Semliki. Perhaps only Queen Elizabeth has more Kobs.

For my three-day visit, I was staying at the Semliki Safari Lodge. The lodge is 28 kilometers away from Karugutu and it is quite a bumpy ride as some heavy trucks plying the reserve route have punched several potholes in it.

The main area of the lodge is a grassthatched facility made of wood material with well-manicured lawns. Inside, the walls are adorned with murals of wild animals like buffalos, kobs and birds. It also contains chairs, tables with white pieces of fabric, a shelf with novels and books about wildlife, a dining area and a fully-stocked bar. Some of the tables are decked with old bones of gigantic animals like elephants.

There is, however, no radio or television in the place. The lodge manager, George Nyanga explains; "We want you to feel the nature all the way, take you off from city life as much as possible."

There are eight rooms for accommodation, which cater to a maximum of 16 people. These are tents encapsulated in similar wooden structures with running water and they are all surrounded by mini thickets to accord guests with a feel of living in the wild.

As night time draws, you can smell the forest wind and feel the clear breezy air.



Meeting the game

I started my game drive at 8am next day with Simon, the tour guide who took me around the large reserve. It is impossible to move 30 metres around the reserve without chancing on a kob or two. They are strewn all over. Buffalos are another common sight in Semliki and as we edged near a herd of three for the first time, I got jittery as I have known them to possess a lot of rage. Soon enough, I got over it as we were always in the comfort of a game drive car- an open Land Rover. "The buffalos have poor sight, so they rely mainly on their smell of sense," Simon tells me.

Simon is a short, calm and diminutive man with a deep understanding of wildlife. As he pointed at the various bird species, he would always pick a book from the car to reference a picture of the bird we just saw. The book contained all bird species in East Africa. We saw different species such as the grey-headed kingfisher, Woodland kingfisher, Abyssinian ground hornbill and Northern Red Bishop, among others.

Warthogs, and waterbucks are some of the other common animals at Semliki. In the first two hour game drive, we saw the rare black and white colobus monkey. Part of their uniqueness is that these monkeys have no thumbs. Poachers kill them for their skins and witchdoctors too for their practice.

At Semliki, game drives take place at 7am and 5pm.

Beyond the wild life

Dinner at the lodge is another attraction. I savoured a range of foods from fish cakes, pineapple flambe, grilled chicken, French fries, fruit salad et al. A swimming pool is also available for guests to cool off during hot hours.

As one quietly descends into sleep to the sounds of birds singing and crickets chirping, a serene calm atmosphere takes over the lodge.

The lodge is lit by kerosene lamps throughout and a thick shadow of darkness hovers over the area once the lamps are put out.

Occasionally, elephants are heard trudging around the forest. Unfortunately, during the time we were there, they were a rare sight due to the sunny weather. Simon explains that the elephants retreat to the forests during such weather because it pierces their bear skin. However, after more than two hours using various tracks, we caught a glimpse of the beasts at a bridge crossing River Wasswa, feasting on leaves and crushing tree branches with their young ones. The elephants prefer the cold, which their bodies can withstand.

Though, Semliki does not have animals such as zebras, giraffes and lions, leopards being rare, the Safari lodge has stood out for comfort and get away feel. The visitors' books are awash with comments about its serenity, spotlessness and natural touch.

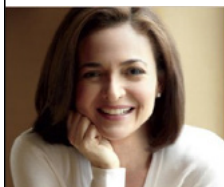
At night, a bonfire is lit for guests to share stories and for its guests to warm up during the usually cold environment in Semliki. The tented suites, the craftily made wood structures takes you away from the hustle and bustle of city life, making you harness the nature more. Even if it is just for two days, it was a worthwhile experience. ■



>> My top 5 reads

By Patricia Twasiima

Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to lead – Sheryl Sandberg



LEAN IN

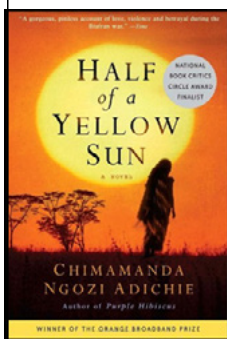
WOMEN, WORK, AND
THE WILL TO LEAD

SHERYL SANDBERG

#1 NATIONAL BEST SELLER

Sandberg shares in this book the ways women are held back and in many ways how we hold ourselves back from success in the workplace. She shines a light on gender differences and offers practical advice to help women achieve their goals. The book challenges us to change the conversation from what women can't do to what we can do, and serves as a rallying cry for all of us to work together to create a more equal world. "Careers are a jungle gym, not a ladder," she says.

Lean In is an account from one of the most successful women in the struggle that comes with being a working woman. It is a timely book that showcases the challenges of today. Her personal stories will often sound like something you might have experienced and I found myself nodding in approval at the accuracy of her tales at certain situations and spaces women often put themselves. This is a book that men should read too. It is important that we all understand the problem, so that we can all champion the cause of women rights.

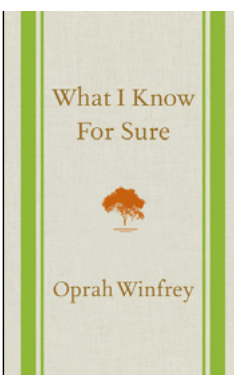


Half of a Yellow Sun – Chimamanda Adichie Ngozi

Now, at the risk of sounding cliché, Chimamanda is one of my all-time favourite authors. Half of a Yellow Sun is centered on the Biafran civil war in Nigeria. It is a story of love and family. It shows just how much we lose in war and also questions the validity of some of these sacrifices, if they are worth it at all.

I re-read this book just before elections earlier this year and it brought a much needed fresh perspective on the conversations of "liberation" that was going around. Often I found myself laughing with and at Ugwu. I was hurt when Olanna and Odiengabo fought and I very much admired Kainene. Well, I should stop now before I give too much away but I enjoyed this book a lot, even more when I read it again.

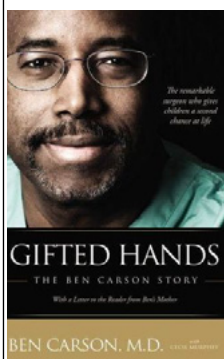
"And it's wrong of you to think that love leaves room for nothing else. It's possible to love something and still condescend to it." - Chimamanda Adichie Ngozi, Half of a Yellow Sun.



What I know for sure – Oprah Winfrey

This is another Bible for me. It is one of those books that I often pick and just leaf through after a long day. This book organized by theme—joy, resilience, connection, gratitude, possibility, awe, clarity and power; provides rare, powerful and intimate glimpses into the heart and mind of one of the world's most extraordinary women. It is for me, one of those books that no matter

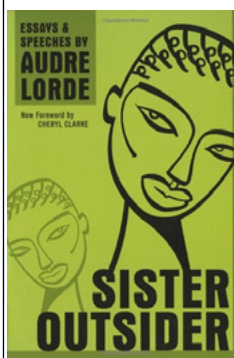
how many times I read it, makes me reflect on my own life and habits. "You don't become what you want, you become what you believe," Oprah says in this book.



Gifted Hands – Ben Carson

This book came to me, at a time when I needed a lot of direction. It was given to me by my father in my adolescence; when I was at crossroads. Gifted Hands is the inspiring story of an inner-city kid with poor grades and little motivation, who, at thirty-three, became Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University Hospital. As a teen in need of encouragement, at a time when it

seemed impossible to excel in whatever I attempted at, Dr. Carson's tale of transformation from an unmotivated ghetto youngster into one of the most respected neurosurgeons in the world was just the right read. I do hope that whoever picks it up will feel just the same way after reading it.



Sister Outsider – Audre Lorde

For any feminist, Audre Lorde is a hero. Sister Outsider celebrates an influential voice in twentieth-century literature. Lorde takes on sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, among other -isms - all issues that are very close to my heart. Her prose is incisive, unflinching, and lyrical reflecting struggle but ultimately offering messages of hope.

Personally, I live by Audre's quotes and so it was like giving candy to a baby when I recently found all of them in one book. This book is one that I would recommend for anyone trying and willing to learn from one of the most amazing feminists to have lived.

Favourite line: "When we define ourselves, when I define myself, the place in which I am like you and the place in which I am not like you, I'm not excluding you from the joining - I'm broadening the joining."

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