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SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE

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Nambu Group:
Pioneer in Sustainable
Agriculture

Access Bank:
Circular Economy
Solutions in Africa's
Financial Landscape

Okavango Wilderness Safaris:
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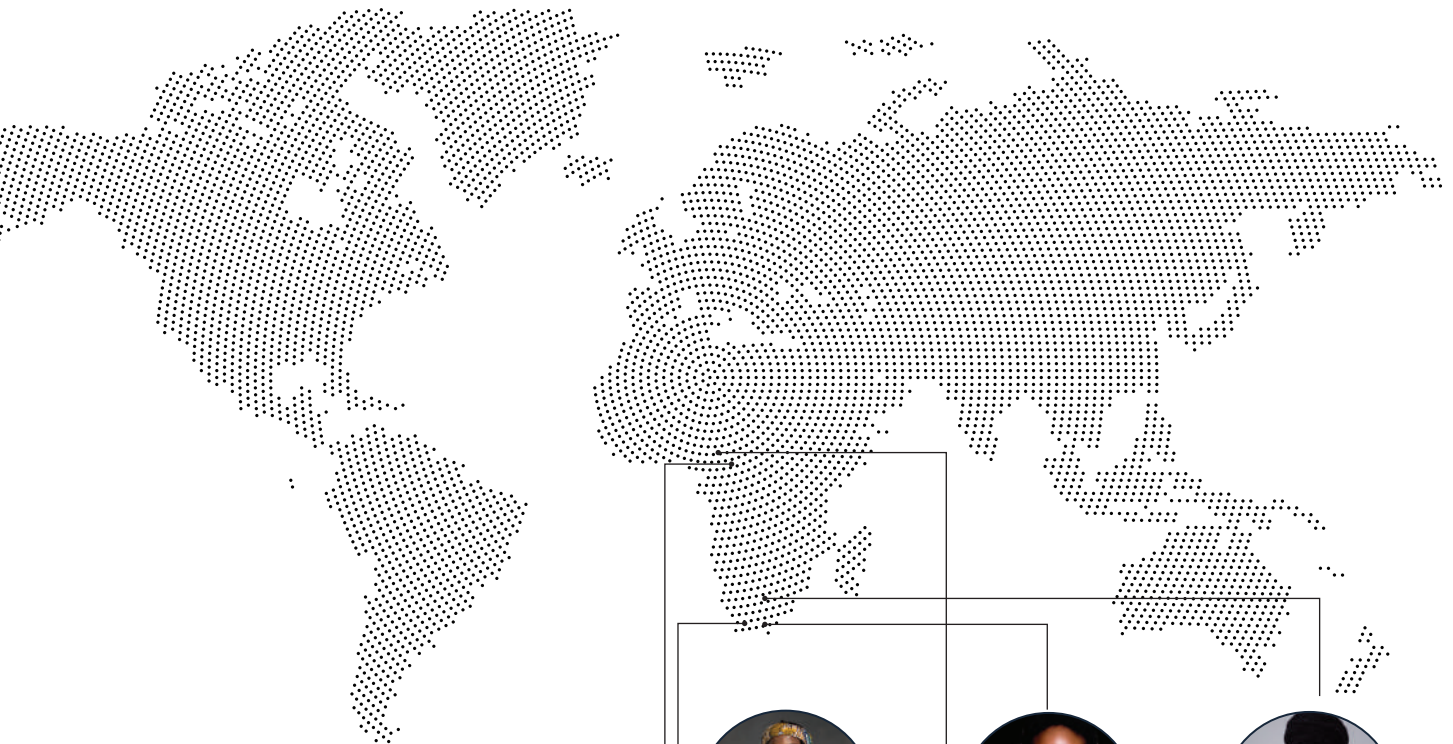


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Editor's Note



The year 2024 will be remembered as a watershed moment, the year the world experienced its hottest temperatures on record. For the first time, global temperatures exceeded the critical 1.5°C warming threshold outlined in the Paris Agreement, offering a stark preview of the challenges ahead if we fail to curb greenhouse gas emissions. This alarming record underscores the urgent need for transformative action across all sectors of society to mitigate the worst effects of climate change.

The scientific community has warned that exceeding 1.5°C, even temporarily, increases the likelihood of catastrophic and irreversible impacts, such as the melting of ice sheets and more frequent extreme weather events - and there is already evidence of this reality on the ground. The consequences of inaction are dire, threatening not only ecosystems

but also human lives and livelihoods. Extreme flooding in regions such as Kenya and Mozambique in 2024, and Sub-Saharan Africa early in 2025 resulted in hundreds of fatalities, illustrating the devastating impact of a warming planet.

Yet, amidst these sobering realities, there is reason for optimism. A growing global movement is committed to achieving net-zero emissions, with countries, cities, businesses, and institutions pledging to reduce their carbon footprint and transition to a sustainable future. The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, set the stage for this collective effort, and the upcoming revisions to

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2025 will provide a crucial opportunity to accelerate progress.

Achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 requires a fundamental transformation of how we think about our planet and its future. Strategies for achieving net-zero emissions include optimising energy efficiency, shifting to renewable energy sources, and reducing reliance on carbon offsets, developing policies and governance systems that nurture action to safe guard the future. Businesses, governments, civil society, academia and societies are taking this clarion call into their hands more than ever. Humanity comes to the understanding that the journey to net-zero will not be easy, and success hinges on an unprecedented push for clear governance guidelines on matters such energy efficiency, waste reduction

and lessening our consumption. Although the 1.5°C target seems unattainable, every effort to limit warming will make a difference. Reducing emissions can mitigate the impacts of climate change and prevent even more catastrophic scenarios.

Effective governance and the implementation of green policies are crucial in forging a path toward sustainability. This issue, "Sustainable Governance," highlights the importance of collaborative efforts across sectors to achieve sustainable development. Moreover, as we celebrate International Women's Day, we honour women who are leading the charge in sustainability, driving policy change, and inspiring environmental protection. Their leadership is pivotal in shaping a more equitable and sustainable future.

This publication celebrates the efforts being made towards net-zero, showcasing initiatives and innovations across various sectors. It is a testament to the power of collective action and a reminder that we all have a role to play in creating a sustainable future. As we race against the clock to save the planet, we embrace the efforts of those who challenge the status quo with determination and hope, knowing that our actions today will determine the world we leave for future generations. To every business and individual moving toward Net-zero, towards saving the planet.

Best,

Corrairie Kinnear

Access Bank on Circular Economy Solutions in Africa's Financial Landscape

By Bem Abubakar

Images by Access Bank Nigeria

Access Bank, one of the largest financial institutions in Africa, focuses on sustainable development and responsible banking practices. The bank's strategy is aligned with global sustainability frameworks, aiming to contribute to Africa's social, economic, and environmental growth.





Here's a simplified breakdown of their key sustainability efforts:

- 1. Climate Action:** Access Bank is reducing its carbon footprint by promoting eco-friendly business practices. They support a shift to a low-carbon economy by focusing on green energy, cutting emissions, and adopting sustainable procurement.
- 2. Ethical Economic Growth:** The Bank encourages responsible lending and supports sectors like renewable energy and climate-smart agriculture. They also provide funding of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to drive economic growth.

3. Community Impact: Access Bank promotes social inclusion by offering affordable financial services to underserved communities. They invest in education, healthcare, and gender equality by supporting women-owned businesses and increasing women's leadership roles.

4. Corporate Governance: Strong governance ensures transparency and accountability. The Bank regularly reports on its sustainability progress and maintains high ethical standards.

Access Bank made history by launching Africa's first Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI)-certified green bond, which supports environmental projects like renewable energy and low-carbon transportation. The proceeds have funded impactful projects such as:

- **Lagos Rail Project:** A low-carbon transport system to cut emissions by over 60%.
- **Flood Defense for Victoria Island:** Protects land and residents from climate risks like flooding.
- **Renewable Energy Projects:** The Bank invested in solar power, generating clean energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.



Access Bank made history by launching Africa's first Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI)-certified green bond, which supports environmental projects like renewable energy and low-carbon transportation.

The bank's sustainability work extends beyond financing. Initiatives like the Climate Fellowship Project train climate advocates across Africa, and Access Bank also works on eco-preservation through tree-planting and biodiversity conservation. These projects align with global climate goals and emphasise the bank's leadership in promoting sustainable finance in Africa.

Through these initiatives, Access Bank is helping communities adapt to climate change, driving economic development, and championing renewable energy efforts, solidifying its role as a leader in sustainable banking.

Access Bank has implemented various innovative waste management and recycling projects to advance sustainability and uplift local communities. A key example is Access

Bank Ghana's partnership with CHAINT AFRIQUE on the "A Sandal More" project. This initiative, launched in 2023, repurposes old car tyres into durable, eco-friendly sandals for schoolchildren. The project has provided 1,000 children with sandals while training 1,000 individuals in recycling skills, creating lasting social and environmental benefits in over 400 communities.

In Nigeria, Access Bank collaborated with FREE Recycle to expand this initiative to Oyo State. They collected and recycled 706 tyres, transforming them into 2,500 sandals, which were distributed to school children. This program not only addresses waste management but also empowers communities through skills development, enhancing education and environmental stewardship. A similar innovation is the "Paper-to-Pencil"

Access Bank has implemented various innovative waste management and recycling projects to advance sustainability and uplift local communities. A key example is Access Bank Ghana's partnership with CHAINT AFRIQUE on the "A Sandal More" project.



SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE

initiative, where Access Bank recycles old branded paper materials into pencils, which are donated to underprivileged school children. Over 20,000 pencils have been produced, reflecting the bank's commitment to reducing waste and supporting education.

Access Bank's internal operations also focus on sustainability. It operates extensive recycling programs across 236 locations, recycling materials like paper, plastic, glass, and aluminium cans. In addition, the "No Paper Initiative" seeks to reduce paper usage by automating processes like memo approvals and payments, significantly lowering their ecological footprint.

Despite these strides, Access Bank has faced challenges, particularly in balancing short-term financial goals with long-term sustainability objectives. The bank addressed this by embedding sustainability into its business strategy, ensuring that financial and environmental goals align. Additionally, the varying regulatory landscapes across

different regions posed difficulties, but Access Bank overcame this by adhering to both local regulations and global sustainability frameworks, such as the Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles and the Equator Principles.

Cultural resistance to adopting sustainable practices was another challenge, both within and outside the organisation. To foster acceptance, the bank launched training programs and awareness campaigns, emphasising the long-term benefits of sustainability. Technological challenges also arose, particularly in implementing energy-efficient solutions. Despite the required investments, Access Bank gradually introduced these technologies, improving both environmental performance and operational efficiency.

Data collection and reporting presented ongoing challenges, especially in measuring sustainability performance across branches. The bank developed a sophisticated system for monitoring and reporting on sustainability efforts,

ensuring transparency and enabling continuous improvement.

A key part of Access Bank's sustainability efforts involves integrating Environmental and Social Risk Management (ESRM) into its lending and decision-making processes. This system includes environmental risk screening and ongoing monitoring, ensuring that the ecological impact of projects is considered throughout the loan lifecycle. The ESRM framework is aligned with both local laws and global standards, enabling the bank to apply best practices consistently across different regions.

Environmental audits further reinforce Access Bank's commitment to sustainability. These audits assess the environmental impact of its operations, ensuring compliance with Nigeria's environmental protection laws and supporting the country's national commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2060.

In collaboration with stakeholders such as regulatory bodies, local



A key part of Access Bank's sustainability efforts involves integrating Environmental and Social Risk Management (ESRM) into its lending and decision-making processes. This system includes environmental risk screening and ongoing monitoring, ensuring that the ecological impact of projects is considered throughout the loan lifecycle.



technologies across its branches. Solar-powered ATMs and photovoltaic systems now power many locations, significantly reducing the bank's carbon footprint. Access Bank has also implemented energy-saving appliances, such as LED lighting and motion-sensitive systems, which optimise electricity use. These efforts are complemented by comprehensive recycling programs that reduce waste.

Additionally, the bank's "No Paper Initiative" has reduced paper consumption by automating processes like memo approvals and payments, further cutting environmental impact. The initiative also includes a digital board book system for meetings, enhancing efficiency while reducing paper usage.

In the long term, Access Bank aims

to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. This ambitious goal involves minimising CO2 emissions and further reducing the bank's environmental footprint. Access Bank has established systems for monitoring energy consumption and waste production, enabling it to track progress and make informed decisions about future sustainability initiatives.

Access Bank's long-term sustainability commitment extends beyond its operations. Through stakeholder engagement, including education and training programs, the bank aims to foster a culture of environmental awareness and responsibility. By encouraging collective action, Access Bank seeks to amplify the impact of its sustainability efforts and contribute to a broader cultural shift toward environmental stewardship. Finally, the bank has integrated sustainability into every aspect of its operations, from waste management and recycling projects to strategic goals of carbon neutrality. By addressing challenges through stakeholder engagement, technological investment, and data-driven monitoring, the bank has positioned itself as a leader in sustainable finance while contributing to both social progress and environmental protection. This comprehensive approach ensures that Access Bank continues to deliver value to its stakeholders while fulfilling its corporate responsibility to safeguard the planet for future generations. 

communities, and NGOs, Access Bank ensures the practical implementation of its environmental policies. This approach allows the bank to adapt to local challenges while aligning its environmental goals with broader societal objectives. Looking ahead, Access Bank's sustainability goals are deeply embedded in its core values and strategy. In the short term, the bank has focused on adopting energy-efficient



Tackling Food Scarcity through Sustainable Agriculture

By Busiswa Lutshaba

Images by Ag Beyond Sustainability

Food scarcity remains a pressing challenge across many African nations, affecting millions and exacerbating poverty and malnutrition. With changing climate patterns, soil degradation, and inefficient farming practices, the ability to feed entire communities has become even more strained. This reality makes it critical for communities to adopt sustainable farming solutions.



By empowering local farmers to grow their own food or collaborate in larger agricultural ventures, we can address food insecurity while promoting a more resilient and self-sufficient approach to farming. One such visionary leading the charge in transforming agriculture is Thapelo Phiri. As the founder of Ag Beyond Sustainability, Phiri is at the

forefront of helping farmers transition to regenerative practices that not only mitigate environmental challenges but also promote long-term food security.

A renowned agripreneur, innovator, and advocate for sustainable agriculture, Phiri's work has gained recognition from prestigious platforms like Scientific American, cementing his

place as a thought leader in the field. His commitment to blending traditional wisdom with innovative techniques has made a significant impact on farming communities, empowering them to adapt to the changing climate while restoring and regenerating the environment. In this conversation, we dive into the principles and practices driving his

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company, exploring the intersection of sustainability, agriculture, and community empowerment.

BL: What inspired you to go beyond traditional sustainability practices in agriculture?

Phiri: My inspiration stems from witnessing the challenges Africa's smallholder farmers face in sustaining soil fertility and adapting to climate change. By blending tradition with innovation, I envisioned a future where farming can go beyond sustainable and regenerative, fostering ecosystems and empowering communities.

BL: How do you integrate environmental considerations into every aspect of your farming/production process?

Phiri: At Ag Beyond Sustainability, we prioritise the upcycling of agricultural waste, especially chicken manure, to produce organic fertilisers such as Dijo Tsa Mobu. This process is a cornerstone of our commitment to sustainability, as it not only reduces waste but also turns

what would otherwise be a harmful byproduct into a valuable resource. The traditional disposal of chicken manure often leads to harmful emissions and pollution, particularly when left untreated. However, by upcycling it into organic fertilisers, we eliminate these negative environmental impacts while providing farmers with an eco-friendly alternative to chemical fertilisers.

Our organic fertilisers are rich in nutrients that help improve soil health and fertility, reducing dependency on synthetic inputs that can degrade the environment over time. This not only supports healthier crops but also strengthens soil ecosystems, fostering long-term productivity. Healthy soil is essential for water retention, nutrient cycling, and carbon sequestration, all of which are vital for the resilience of agricultural systems, especially in a changing climate.

BL: What innovative practices have you implemented to reduce the environmental footprint of your operations?

Phiri: We've pioneered the use of bio-digesters to upcycle raw chicken manure into liquid organic fertilisers,

biochar production from invasive trees for soil remediation, vermin-tea inoculation, and non-GMO seeds. Our regenerative practices include cover cropping, livestock integration, and training farmers in sustainable methods. Additionally, our collaboration on carbon credit projects helps offset emissions.

BL: How do you measure the environmental impact of your business, and what specific targets are you aiming to achieve?

Phiri: We use data-driven sustainability technologies to track carbon sequestration, biodiversity restoration, and soil health. Our targets include achieving net-zero carbon emissions, increasing soil organic matter by 15%, and boosting water retention in soils by 20% over the next decade.

BL: Can you share any successful collaborations with environmental organisations or sustainable tech providers?

Phiri: Ag Beyond Sustainability has partnered with ESTAH Society from India, NEXUS Togo-Lab in Togo, Aqualibre UK, and we have university partners with whom we work on research projects. We also partnered with Nkutha



We create employment opportunities and provide training in regenerative farming methods. By producing high-quality fertilisers locally, we reduce dependency on imports, empowering smallholder farmers with affordable, eco-friendly inputs. We are deeply committed to creating meaningful employment opportunities and fostering economic empowerment in local communities.



Farms on a regenerative agriculture project in Krugersdorp, integrating biochar production and sustainable farming practices. Equipment sourced from Jarnsmior supports our innovative fertiliser production. These collaborations help advance sustainable agriculture across South Africa.

BL: How does your agricultural business contribute to local communities?

Phiri: We create employment opportunities and provide training in regenerative farming methods. By producing high-quality fertilisers locally, we reduce dependency on imports, empowering smallholder farmers with affordable, eco-friendly inputs. We are deeply committed to creating meaningful employment opportunities and fostering economic empowerment in local communities

BL: What are some of the social initiatives you've championed to support workers, small farmers, or neighbouring communities?

Phiri: We offer capacity-building workshops, access to financial resources, and subsidised fertilisers for local farmers. Our upcoming Eastern Cape visit focuses on transferring skills to improve livelihoods and ensure food security, by powering individuals and communities, with the hope they will develop a continuous cycle by equipping others for more impact, education and awareness.

BL: 'Agriculture Beyond Sustainability' – explain what this means to you.

Phiri: For me, it's about creating systems that regenerate resources, enhance ecosystems, and build resilience against climate change. It transcends sustaining what exists to actively improve

and restore the environment and communities.

BL: In what ways do you educate or involve the public in sustainable agriculture or environmental stewardship?

Phiri: Through workshops, webinars, and partnerships with institutions of higher learning and organisations, we raise awareness about regenerative practices. My speaking engagements at global events also amplify the message of environmental stewardship.

BL: How do you engage with and support smallholders or local farmers to promote a more equitable agricultural ecosystem?

Phiri: We provide access to sustainable inputs, share technical expertise, and advocate for policy changes that prioritise smallholders. Projects like our organic fertiliser production and biochar



initiative equip farmers with tools to restore soil health and reduce costs.

BL: What role do ESG considerations play in your decision-making processes?

Phiri: ESG principles are central to our operations, influencing every decision from product development to stakeholder engagement. We align with the SDGs, ensuring our actions address environmental, social, and governance challenges.

BL: How do you ensure compliance with environmental and social regulations, and how do you respond to new or evolving requirements?

Phiri: We actively monitor regulations and collaborate with high-profile industry experts to adapt quickly. By maintaining transparent operations and proactively adopting best practices, we stay ahead of compliance demands.

BL: What major challenges have you faced in building an agriculture business around ESG principles?

Phiri: It's tricky because it is still early to find a link between agriculture and ESG. Resistance from traditional stakeholders, limited funding for innovation, and a

lack of awareness about regenerative practices posed initial challenges. However, consistent education, partnerships, and proof of impact have helped overcome these barriers.

BL: How have you overcome resistance, whether from stakeholders, supply chains, or regulations, to achieve your goals?

Phiri: We focus on demonstrating the economic and ecological benefits of our methods. By engaging stakeholders through workshops and showcasing tangible outcomes, we've gained trust and alignment.

BL: What does 'the future is green' mean to you, especially in the context of agriculture?

Phiri: For me, it means a shift to practices that restore ecosystems, mitigate climate change, and secure food systems for future generations. It's about embracing innovation and equity in agriculture that is inclusive for all and accessible.

BL: What new trends or technologies are you excited to see emerge in sustainable agriculture?

Phiri: The integration of Artificial Intelligence and IoT for precision farming, innovations in biochar applications, and advances in regenerative seed varieties are particularly exciting. These technologies promise greater efficiency and resilience.

BL: What do you hope to achieve in the next five years with respect to ESG principles?

Phiri: I aim to expand our regenerative farming projects across Africa, contribute to global carbon reduction efforts, and foster partnerships that elevate smallholder farmers. Achieving these goals will enhance food security and environmental health.

BL: How do you see your business contributing to the broader vision of a sustainable and resilient food system?

Phiri: By upcycling waste and partnering with recycling companies, improving soil health, and empowering farmers, we address critical food system challenges. Our initiatives promote regenerative agriculture and resilient farming communities.

BL: If you could influence one major change in the agricultural sector to accelerate a greener future, what would it be?

Phiri: I have no doubts that I would advocate for policy reforms that prioritise regenerative agriculture, ensuring subsidies and incentives support practices that rebuild ecosystems and secure livelihoods. There are major gaps in the industry along with limited resources and red tape.

Through Thapelo Phiri's vision and dedication to regenerative farming practices, Ag Beyond Sustainability is helping pave the way for a greener, more resilient future in agriculture. With his leadership, the company is not only transforming farming practices but also empowering local communities and contributing to global sustainability efforts. 

S&P Global & Kenya's First Deforestation- Reduction Carbon Registry

By Staff Writer

Images by Getty Images and Lidia Grosso

S&P Global Commodity Insights, the leading independent provider of information, data, analysis, benchmark prices, and workflow solutions for the commodities, energy, and energy transition markets, announced it has been selected by Conservation International on behalf of the Government of Kenya, to develop Kenya's REDD+ registry that will aid the nation's climate goals and assist the wider carbon-reduction community and marketplace.

Conservation International, through its science, policy and investment-based partnership, works to strengthen the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources to alleviate poverty, tackle climate change and reduce biodiversity loss.

"This is a significant milestone for Kenya as it seeks to establish an enabling environment to mobilize climate finance for Nationally Determined Contributions implementation in the Forestry Sector. It



“

We applaud the important step that Kenya is taking in registry development and the example it sets for Africa more broadly. We are honored to be selected to provide the registry technology, and look forward to working with both the Kenyan government and Conservation International.”

Jonty Rushforth

Head of Environmental Solutions,
S&P Global Commodity Insights



is also in line with the established legal and regulatory framework established under the Climate Change Act,” said Psamson Nzioki, Programme Manager, Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ at Conservation International.

The new REDD+ registry for Kenya, due to be operational by the second quarter of 2025, will allow complete lifecycle tracking of REDD+ carbon credits generated from interventions aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, including the sustainable management of forests, conservation of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Jonty Rushforth, Head of Environmental Solutions, S&P Global Commodity Insights, said, “We applaud the important step that Kenya is taking in registry development and the example it sets for Africa more broadly. We are honored to be selected to provide the registry technology, and look forward to working with both the Kenyan government and Conservation International.”

S&P Global’s Environmental Registry, with a 15-year history as the go-to solution in carbon, water, and biodiversity environmental registries, is relaunching as a significantly enhanced, customizable registry-as-a-service platform. The infrastructure and functionality

enhancements make the registry solution faster, more efficient; more user-friendly; and able to address a broader set of industry challenges. It’s aimed at further augmenting credibility and reliability in environmental markets.


“We look forward to working with S&P Global Commodity Insights and believe its Environmental Registry is a smart solution for building our registry because of its security, customization to our needs, and readiness,” said George Tarus, Agriculture Forest Conservation Secretary, Kenya State Department for Forestry. “We are proud to be one of the first, if not the first African nation to create a national registry of REDD+ projects that reduce deforestation and decrease carbon emissions, but one that will in turn help generate new revenue streams for us and our local communities.”

Africa, as an important source of potential supply of carbon credits, is positioned to be strategic to the achievement of the world’s goals under the Paris Agreement. Africa made up less than 10% of total global greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 and its emissions are projected to remain relatively flat through 2030, according to S&P Global Commodity Insights research and analysis. “Kenya, in particular, is a key player in the voluntary carbon market, having historically been the top issuer of

carbon credits in Africa, mainly from REDD+ projects,” the analysis states.

The S&P Global Commodity Insights Environmental Registry infrastructure software and platform allows a user to track its environmental projects and manage associated carbon and other environmental credits across their life cycles on both small and large scales. Its built-in tracking and workflow management capabilities allow for easier monitoring of National Determined Contributions and helps to avoid double counting of credits, thereby facilitating greater confidence in the carbon markets.

By using S&P Global Commodity Insights’ Environmental Registry, the Kenyan REDD+ registry will automatically have access to S&P Global’s Meta Registry[®], a new centralized connectivity platform to link different registries and exchanges from around the world so they can share information.

S&P Global Commodity Insights is valued for its independence, established history of registry-build delivery, its deep and broad understanding of environmental markets, carbon emissions, carbon mitigation, and voluntary and compliance carbon markets, and its century-plus history as a trusted partner in energy and commodity markets. 



Nambu Group: Pioneer in Sustainable Agriculture

By Zimkhita Kweza

Images by Nambu Group

Agriculture is one of Africa's biggest industries, as 60% of the region's population is sustained by agricultural practices; the bad news is that global meat and dairy demand is increasing, especially in developing countries like South Africa, and key ingredients like soy and fishmeal, critical protein sources for livestock, are experiencing supply strain due to limited arable land and overfishing. Developing countries are significantly affected by climate change, and this is no different when it comes to livestock protein. Climate change affects crop yields, reduces livestock feed availability, and puts additional pressure on protein supply.

Agriculture is one of Africa's biggest industries, as 60% of the region's population is sustained by agricultural practices; the bad news is that global meat and dairy demand is increasing, especially in developing countries like South Africa, and key ingredients like soy and fishmeal, critical protein sources for livestock, are experiencing supply strain due to limited arable land and overfishing.



The good news is that because of the demand pressure on protein supply, the agriculture industry is exploring sustainable, innovative protein options like insects, algae, and lab-cultured proteins to supplement livestock diets. The Nambu Group is one of the dynamic and unique companies shaking up the sustainable production of livestock protein in South Africa; yes, one might say it's "making" a protein shake.

AN INTRODUCTION OF THE NAMBU GROUP

Nambu was started on a veranda in the small town of Makhanda by Eastern Cape-born Lowell Scarr in 2018. The

company sought to solve the global livestock protein shortage and the gross food waste by producing livestock protein made from food waste. About 1.3 billion tons of food are wasted globally each year, representing one-third of all food produced for human consumption. At the same time, nearly 10% of the global population faces food insecurity, highlighting a stark contrast between food waste and hunger. Lowell grew up in a very socially conscious household, with his parents working in the agricultural space, his Father working as an environmental conservationist, and his Mother an organic agricultural food auditor. So, even though he didn't inherit a farm and

land, he had a healthy understanding of agriculture, sustainability, and the social issues faced by many South Africans, such as unemployment. Through the Allan Grey Orbis Foundation, Lowell learned about the value of entrepreneurship, the importance of adding value to the Eastern Cape and making a difference in the socio-economic issues many face.

WHAT SETS NAMBU GROUP APART FROM ITS LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION OR COUNTERPARTS

Simply put, the company engages in producing protein for livestock through the use of food waste, breeding maggots



the black soldier fly in particular to make a protein that will be ingested by livestock that then goes into the demand for livestock-based products like milk, egg, and meat. The company diverges waste from landfills, producing local organic fertilisers replacing highly chemicalised imported fertilisers. What sets this company apart from its counterparts is the people-focused and people-heavy production model; its operation model fits the South and broader African context with minimum and appropriate technology that is easily accessible and operated locally and reduces the overreliance on imported technology and experts. Unlike the rest of the industry which is highly mechanised and grossly scaled, Nambu intentionally absorbs a semi-skilled, unskilled labour force to address the high unemployment in South Africa and the Eastern Cape in particular. Even though the company has a facility in the Western Cape, it doesn't shy away

from smaller regions like East London and Makhanda often ignored by bigger protein conglomerates.

Another unique attribute of this organisation is the offering of training, support, and consulting of smallholder farmers on how to make protein sustainably which is very different from the industry-wise behaviour of withholding information and not being open to "outsiders".

"I know people might say, why are we helping businesses that might be our competition one day, and we welcome that; we believe that the more people know about protein making, the better because it grows the market and opens up opportunities to support these small farmers", says Lowell.

ESG FRAMEWORK

The Nambu Group business model is intentionally infused with environmental and social responsibility and governance; even though it is still a small company, the foundation and inception of this company are based on profit maximisation and bettering the local people and planet as a whole. Environmentally the company uses a recycling system for their product, and they pick their facility location based on natural elements like the weather and heat or humidity. Furthermore, Nambu leverages biological resources like the biological heat from the large larvae (when it's cold instead of using electricity, insects produce heat so they place larger larvae in the nursery for a bioheat system) and good airflow to help with their production process instead of controlling the conditions with machines, using tons of electricity, and emitting carbon dioxide and carbon equivalent emissions.

Nambu prides itself on gender and social equity, with 50% of the trainees in their consulting and training services being youth members and 50% being female. The company complies with the basic rules, regulations, and legislation regarding handling, processing, and recycling waste, such as the Natural Environment Waste Management Act, national standards for shredding waste, etc. Waste classification is part of safety and risk analysis. The company prioritised training for the correct use of PPE, sterilisation, and prevention of potential

Nambu prides itself on gender and social equity, with 50% of the trainees in their consulting and training services being youth members and 50% being female.

contamination, as well as doing work without increasing human risks in any of its production lines. Regular fertiliser products and larvae are tested regularly for nutrient values, pathogens, heavy metals, harmful fungi, and contamination.

A monthly internal report on waste divergence from landfills, protein, and fertiliser produced, as well as the number of jobs produced full-time, part-time, and secondary/ supporting jobs, is presented to the stakeholders.

Unfortunately, there is no industry standard for the quality of products produced, therefore companies like Nambu must self-govern; Lowell is currently sitting on the industry executive board, presently developing best practices primarily informed by international best practice as its imperative for the benefit of the industry in the long run. Nambu aims to reduce the reliance on imports, and one of the ways it has successfully done this is by localising the manufacturing of the breeding and occupation cages for the flies. Flies lay eggs inside the breeding cages and the larvae does the waste reform. Breeding and occupation cages were unavailable in South Africa but are now made in Makhanda, packed, and shipped locally and internationally, thus increasing employment and enterprise opportunities.

Climate change and various other challenges are forcing the agricultural industry to be innovative and sustainable. With the rise of companies like the Nambu group rooted in planet and people alongside profit maximisation, the future seems promising for the Agricultural sector. 



Eight Women Shaping a Sustainable Future

Honoured by the Global Landscape Forum

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform focused on integrated land use. It connects individuals with a shared vision of creating productive, equitable, and resilient landscapes. The GLF is led by Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF) in collaboration with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank.

In celebration of this year's International Women's Day, the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) has, for the sixth consecutive year, recognised eight extraordinary women who are driving transformative change for a more sustainable future. These intergenerational changemakers are making significant strides in areas such as land rights, restoration, science, finance, policymaking, and the arts.

In celebration of this year's International Women's Day, the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) has, for the sixth consecutive year, recognised eight extraordinary women who are driving transformative change for a more sustainable future.

Hailing from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America, these women embody bold, evidence-based action rooted in a deep commitment to protecting life on Earth. They are tackling pressing global challenges head-on and transforming their expertise into impactful solutions through collective environmental action.

Here are the eight women honoured for their visionary contributions to Earth in 2025 and their words of shared vision for a sustainable future:

THE CHANGEMAKERS

THE ARTIST: DANIELLE KHAN DA SILVA

A queer South Asian-Portuguese photographer, filmmaker, writer, and National Geographic Explorer, Khan Da Silva uses her art as a tool for collective liberation. Recognised as one of Canada's Top 30 Under 30 Sustainable Leaders, her work bridges conservation and intersectionality.

"Every one of us is a storyteller... we have opportunities to shift the landscape." – Danielle Khan Da Silva

THE BEE GUARDIAN: YSA CALDERÓN

Founder of the environmental enterprise Sumak Kawsay and a Quechua descendant from Peru, Calderón is dedicated to conserving native stingless bees. Winner of the 2024 Midori Prize for Biodiversity, she also supports land restoration and empowers local women through sustainable livelihoods.

"When we invest in community-led solutions... we shape a more just future for all." – Ysa Calderón

THE ECOLOGIST: SONYA DEWI

As director of Asia for World Agroforestry (ICRAF), Dewi leads efforts to mitigate climate change through sustainable land management. Based in Indonesia, she is inspired by the interconnectedness of life and has developed innovative tools to address environmental crises.

"Youth are our future. Nurturing young people should be our biggest investment." – Sonya Dewi

THE FUNDRAISER: REKIA FOUDEL

Born in Niger, Foudel is the founder of the Barka Fund, an impact investment group supporting startups and SMEs across Sub-Saharan Africa. Her mission is to make climate action equitable and effective by championing locally-led solutions.

"I believe the critical turning point needed in finance is the recognition and systematic support of locally-led climate solutions, particularly in regions most vulnerable to climate change." – Rekia Foudel

THE INNOVATOR: CATHERINE NAKALEMBE

A Ugandan scientist and Africa director of NASA Harvest, Nakalembe leverages satellite data and artificial intelligence to bridge the gap between technology, geography, and food security. She is also an assistant professor at the University of Maryland.

"I've remained committed to making tangible differences in African farmers' lives by enhancing

their resilience to the complexities of food production in an era of climate vulnerability." – Catherine Nakalembe

THE LAWMAKER: CÉLIA XAKRIABÁ

An Indigenous federal deputy from Minas Gerais, Brazil, Xakriabá became the first Indigenous woman elected as a federal deputy in her state. A lifelong advocate for Indigenous rights and climate action, she won the 2024 Congresso em Foco Award for her work in sustainability.

"Many seem to think the environment is just about trees, we are the environment." – *Célia Xakriabá*

THE LEADER: SUBHRA BHATTACHARJEE


Hailing from India, Bhattacharjee serves as Director General of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). She has been instrumental in advancing policies that address climate change and deforestation while promoting social equity through multi-stakeholder partnerships.

"Forests are at the heart of a sustainable future, supporting both ecological balance and economic well-being." – Subhra Bhattacharjee

THE PROTECTOR: DAYANA BLANCO

A young Indigenous leader from Bolivia, Blanco co-founded the Uru Uru Team to restore Uru Uru Lake using principles rooted in Aymara culture. She also founded Warmi Shining to educate rural girls in Bolivia's highlands.

The biggest challenge I face as an Indigenous woman is the expectation that a man should lead solutions." – Dayana Blanco

Follow the stories of these inspiring women and their work shaping Earth's future in 2025, visit GLF's website: www.globallandscapesforum.org 

Okavango Wilderness Safaris:

Relief for Partner Communities Affected by Drought

By Staff Writer

Images by Okavango Wilderness Safaris

Okavango Wilderness Safaris has delivered over 1,000 food parcels to six of its partner communities in the Okavango Delta devastated by the recent drought, bringing relief to 1,600 people facing food insecurity.

Wilderness Safaris is a leading ecotourism operator in Africa, founded in Botswana in 1983. The company operates across eight countries, offering luxury safari experiences while promoting conservation and community development. Wilderness Safaris is committed to responsible tourism, supporting local communities through various initiatives, including the Wilderness Wildlife Trust, which funds conservation and community projects.

In times of crisis, such as extreme weather events, Wilderness Safaris has demonstrated its commitment to supporting local communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization distributed food relief to affected communities, reaching nearly 37,000 people in northern Botswana. This approach aligns with broader efforts to enhance community resilience and support sustainable livelihoods in the face of environmental challenges. By integrating local businesses into their supply chain and providing economic opportunities, Wilderness Safaris contributes to poverty reduction and food security, essential for building resilience against extreme weather events. “Together with community leaders and partners, we ensured the quick rollout of food parcels in November, December, and January, to reach the most affected community members during the peak of the drought. Managed





through the Kgotla (community meetings' locations), the monthly distribution of food parcels took place in the Okavango Community Trust (OCT) villages near Wilderness Vumbura Plains (Seronga, Gunotsoga, Eretsha, Beetsha, and Gudigwa), as well as Sankuyo village", noted Joe Matome, Okavango Wilderness Safaris Caretaker MD.

The prolonged drought in Botswana, the most severe in decades, has brought significant challenges for both people and wildlife. As water sources diminished, rural communities experienced severe water shortages, impacting agriculture and livestock farming, vital for livelihoods in these areas. Wildlife in the Okavango Delta travelled longer distances searching for water, leading to increased human-wildlife conflict as animals encroached on populated areas. These dry conditions intensified competition for limited resources, putting pressure on ecosystems and people who rely on them for sustenance and survival.

"We recognise the ongoing and devastating consequences of drought for farmers and communities. While Wilderness Botswana assists farmers in these villages annually through ploughing and seed provision, we saw the need to do more this season due to the particularly harsh conditions. This initiative was essential in supporting the people we proudly work with and among. They are our neighbours, and it's the most neighbourly thing to do, to help where we can", added Kabelo Binns, Okavango Wilderness Safaris Board Chairperson.

As a result of the generous support of the Michael and Karen Stone Family Foundation, this Drought-relief Nutrition Programme also had a positive impact on partner communities in Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. In total, Wilderness delivered



approximately 7,000 food-relief parcels to 14 communities and 31 schools, providing much-needed relief to some 15,000 individuals who were facing food insecurity and malnutrition.

"With over 40 years of experience in conservation tourism, we understand that local communities are custodians of the wild areas and wildlife that together, we help to protect. As their partners, colleagues, family and friends, we remain committed to helping them when they need us most", Kabelo continued.

"We join our partner communities in celebrating the recent blessing of rain, as this will allow farmers to plant, and livestock to recover. However, we know it will take some time before a significant harvest is possible, and for farmers and communities to support themselves again, which is why we felt it critical to bring some much-needed relief to them in their time of need", concluded Joe. 🇳🇸

Building Accountability from the Ground up

Transforming Governance In Nigeria

By Bem Abubakar Images by Heal Atumeyi

In a society where governance is often seen through the lens of corruption and inefficiency, Accountability Lab Nigeria has stepped up to transform this narrative by cultivating a culture of integrity and transparency. Through targeted initiatives and a focus on grassroots engagement, the organisation is reimagining how governance can be made more accountable and inclusive. The group's interventions are driven by a clear understanding that meaningful change must start at the local level, where citizens interact most directly with governance structures.

At the core of their strategy are three pillars that guide their work: campaigns, knowledge, and community-building. Each of these areas is meticulously designed to amplify the voices of those driving change and to embed a sense of responsibility and openness in governance processes. By leveraging these pillars, Accountability Lab aims to not only highlight positive examples of integrity but also equip a new generation of leaders with the skills and resources they need to sustain the momentum. One of her flagship initiatives is the Integrity Icon campaign, which showcases honest government officials celebrated by the very communities they serve. This campaign seeks to reshape the image of public service by rewarding ethical behaviour and demonstrating that integrity is not just possible but achievable within the civil service. Over time, Integrity Icon has grown into a movement that reaches millions of people, inspiring citizens to demand higher standards from their leaders and pushing others within public institutions to adopt these values.





The Integrity Icon campaign has made a considerable impact by involving citizens in the nomination and selection process, thereby creating a sense of shared ownership over the outcomes. When public servants are recognized for their honest work, it not only validates their efforts but also sends a message to others that integrity is a valued trait worth aspiring to. By making integrity visible and desirable, the campaign is gradually shifting societal perceptions of what public service should stand for. Another key campaign is Voice2Rep, which leverages the power of music to advocate for transparency and freedom of expression. By tapping into the creative energy of young artists, the program mobilises a new generation of activists who use their craft to influence public discourse and challenge governance norms. Through workshops, mentorship, and public performances, Voice2Rep provides a platform for young people to express their thoughts on accountability issues and raise awareness among their peers.

The use of music as a tool for social change is particularly effective in a country like Nigeria, where creative expression is a powerful form of communication. By linking art and advocacy, Voice2Rep has sparked conversations that might not have occurred in more traditional forums. This approach also ensures that the message of accountability reaches a broader audience,

including those who might not be actively engaged in civic discussions.

The second pillar of Accountability Lab Nigeria's work is the development of knowledge through training and mentorship. Programs like the Accountability Incubator and Integrity Innovation Lab provide reform-minded individuals with the tools, skills, and networks necessary to drive change within and outside of government. These platforms offer tailored guidance to help participants navigate complex governance structures while also creating a space for shared learning and collaboration. Participants in these programs undergo rigorous training that covers everything from project management to public communication. They are paired with experienced mentors who help refine their ideas and provide strategic advice on how to implement their projects. This hands-on approach ensures that the incubator graduates are not just equipped with theoretical knowledge but also have the practical skills needed to overcome real-world challenges.

In addition to formal training, the incubator provides opportunities for participants to engage with each other and with external stakeholders. This peer-learning environment fosters a spirit of collaboration and mutual support, which is crucial for sustaining momentum even in the face of setbacks. By building

a pipeline of informed, capable leaders, Accountability Lab is ensuring that the next generation is equipped to sustain and expand these efforts. The Integrity Innovation Lab focuses specifically on developing solutions that address accountability gaps at the community level. Through this initiative, participants are encouraged to experiment with new ideas, test different approaches, and learn from their failures. This emphasis on innovation ensures that the lab is not just replicating existing solutions but is actively pushing





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the boundaries of what is possible in governance reform.

The third and arguably most transformative area of their work is community-building. Accountability Lab recognizes that change must be rooted in the communities it seeks to impact. Through initiatives like Civic Action Teams (CivActs) and participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP), they have established local mechanisms that promote open governance and facilitate continuous dialogue between citizens and government. In Nigeria, the CivActs model has empowered citizens to provide real-time feedback on service delivery, which is then communicated to local authorities. This has led to tangible improvements in areas like healthcare and education, demonstrating that transparency and collaboration can indeed lead to better outcomes. The CivActs model is based on the principle that governance works best when citizens are actively involved in monitoring and evaluation. By providing a platform for community members to report issues and track the government's response, the initiative has created a feedback loop that keeps public officials accountable. In practice, this means that a problem reported today can be addressed within weeks, not months or years, as is often the case

in more traditional governance systems.

Participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) has further strengthened Accountability Lab Nigeria's community-building efforts by linking local initiatives to broader, national-level reforms. Through its involvement with the OGP, the organisation has been able to scale up successful community-driven projects and influence policy discussions at the highest levels. This multi-level



engagement is crucial for ensuring that local successes are not isolated but are part of a larger movement for systemic change.

By linking these three pillars—campaigns, knowledge, and communities—Accountability Lab Nigeria is not just advocating for change; it is actively building the framework for a more accountable and transparent society. Their work is a testament to the idea that integrity is not an abstract concept, but a tangible goal that can be realised through strategic engagement and a commitment to empowering individuals. As Nigeria continues its journey towards stronger governance, Accountability Lab's approach offers a replicable model for how transformation can be achieved from the ground up, one honest leader, one informed citizen, and one engaged community at a time. ¹⁰



Shaunei Gerber
Futurelect's Head of
Digital, Media, and Product

Powering Tomorrow: Futurelect on Shaping Africa's Next Generation of Leaders

By Busiswa Lutshaba

Images by Futurelect

Futurelect is a trailblazing non-profit organisation at the forefront of civic education in Africa. Driven by a mission to empower a new generation of ethical political, governmental, and civic leaders across the continent, Futurelect continues to champion innovative solutions to Africa's pressing challenges. Gerber's recognition highlights the organisation's commitment to excellence and its leadership's pivotal role in shaping the future of Africa's civic and political landscape.

We shine the spotlight on Shaunei Gerber, Futurelect's Head of Digital, Media, and Product, we highlight her shortlisting for two esteemed accolades at the 2024 Africa Tech Festival Awards, namely: The Changing Lives category and Female Innovator Of The Year. We also delve into the significance of her nominations, celebrating her outstanding contributions to the organisation and the sector. Additionally, explore how Shanei's work aligns with Futurelect's unwavering dedication to fostering transformative leadership across the African continent.

Established to bridge the leadership gap and address systemic barriers preventing diverse representation in governance, the Futurelect app stands as a leading platform for emerging African leaders. The platform primarily enhances access to vital leadership resources. With a focus on civic education, the app is designed specifically for the youth demographic, particularly those aged 16 to 34. Since its launch in November 2023, Futurelect has made significant strides, reaching over 3 million young people across South Africa. This achievement underscores its mission to empower the next generation of leaders to vote purposefully and engage actively in their communities.

APP ACCESSIBILITY AND REACH

Futurelect's core mission is to connect citizens with essential civic education. The app provides accessible, non-partisan courses that are independently peer-reviewed, ensuring that users receive high-quality content. The emphasis on youth engagement is critical; as one spokesperson for Futurelect noted, "We aim to equip young people with the knowledge they need to effect positive change in their communities." This focus on empowerment is particularly impactful in a region where civic education has often been overlooked.

UNIQUE FEATURES FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Recognising the challenges faced by communities in remote or underserved

areas, Futurelect has incorporated several unique features into its app. These include data-light functionality and downloadable content for offline use, allowing users to access materials without incurring high data costs. Videos embedded in their YouTube channel take up minimal space on devices, making it easier for users with limited storage capacity.

Moreover, the app includes closed captions on its videos, enabling audiences to read along and fully grasp the information presented. To further enhance accessibility, Futurelect is expanding its multilingual interface to include languages such as isiXhosa,

The app provides accessible, non-partisan courses that are independently peer-reviewed, ensuring that users receive high-quality content. The emphasis on youth engagement is critical; as one spokesperson for Futurelect noted.

isiZulu, and Sesotho. This commitment to inclusivity ensures that language barriers do not hinder access to crucial civic education.

Moreover, the app integrates interactive learning tools, such as video tutorials and peer-reviewed materials, which empower users in regions where traditional civic education resources may be scarce. By providing these resources, Futurelect is not just educating young leaders; it is also fostering a culture of active citizenship and civic engagement.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Futurelect's commitment to sustainability is evident in its design and implementation of leadership

programs. The app encourages active citizenry throughout the year—not just during election cycles—by embedding sustainability principles into its curriculum. Modules cover topics such as ethical governance, resource management, and sustainable policy-making, all tailored to the South African context with plans for expansion across other regions in Africa.

CHAMPIONING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

To cultivate a culture of active citizenship among its users, Futurelect equips South Africans with the tools necessary to understand and participate in governance processes. The Programme team spearheads various community initiatives, including youth education drives and local civic education workshops. These efforts are complemented by extensive online digital campaigns across social media platforms aimed at encouraging participation and engagement.

As one participant shared, "Through Futurelect's workshops, I learned not only about my rights but also how to advocate for them within my community." Such testimonials highlight the tangible impact of Futurelect's initiatives on individual lives and communities.

ESG ALIGNMENT

Futurelect's programmes are firmly aligned with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles. By advocating for ethical governance and diversity in leadership, Futurelect places social impact at the core of its mission. The emphasis on governance is reflected in the app's non-partisan content that promotes transparency and accountability among leaders.

The organisation has been steadfast on minimising resource use while integrating civic education into the learning experiences of its users. As one of the founders stated, "Our goal is to empower youth and marginalised communities with the knowledge that fosters responsible leadership."

FUTURELECT'S AFRICA EXPANSION

Futurelect has ambitious plans for expansion beyond South Africa into other parts of Africa. The strategy includes piloting the app in East and West Africa with customisable content that reflects regional governance frameworks, languages, and cultural nuances. Partnerships with local organisations will ensure that content remains contextually relevant and effectively reaches target audiences.

However, this expansion does not come without challenges. Diverse governance systems across African nations present a complex landscape for implementation. Additionally, varying technological infrastructures can hinder access to digital platforms. Language barriers further complicate outreach efforts. To address these challenges, Futurelect is strengthening collaborations with grassroots organisations while investing in multilingual content. The app is being optimised for low-bandwidth settings to ensure accessibility even in areas with limited internet connectivity.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Looking ahead, Futurelect envisions a generation of citizens and civic leaders who embody values of integrity, inclusivity, and innovation. The platform positions itself as a catalyst for change by democratising access to civic education and building networks of change-makers who actively shape Africa's political landscape.

To support this vision, current and potential users can play an active role by engaging with the app's content and sharing it within their networks. Providing feedback helps improve offerings while users can also contribute by becoming mentors or joining Futurelect's outreach programmes.

RECOGNITION AS A FEMALE INNOVATOR

The nomination for the Female Innovator of the Year for the Africa Tech Festival for the year 2024 has been a



significant milestone for Futurelect and its leadership team. This recognition affirms their commitment to leveraging technology for societal change while underscoring the importance of women in leadership roles within tech sectors.

As one nominee remarked, "This nomination inspires us to continue breaking barriers and advancing tech-driven solutions that serve the public good." - says Shaun.ei

It highlights not only the potential for African women to lead innovation but also challenges outdated norms globally.

This recognition serves as a powerful motivator for women considering careers in technology and leadership roles. It demonstrates what can be achieved through determination and vision while amplifying visibility for women in tech fields historically dominated by men. Futurelect actively supports women by integrating gender-sensitive leadership modules into its curriculum and ensuring equitable representation within its alumni network.

SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT POST-PROGRAM

To ensure that beneficiaries remain engaged citizens even after completing their programmes, Futurelect maintains an active alumni network comprising over 137 individuals who have graduated from various initiatives. This network offers mentorship opportunities, workshops, and peer collaboration avenues.

The app also provides continuous civics learning modules alongside updates on governance trends. Alumni are encouraged to share their impact stories through these platforms, creating an enduring connection that empowers them to cast informed votes representing their needs.

SHAPING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

The inspiration behind creating Futurelect stems from a desire to bridge leadership gaps while addressing systemic barriers that prevent diverse representation in governance. Plans are underway to launch youth-targeted



initiatives aimed at high school and university students—ensuring early exposure to civic education and leadership principles.

“We’re deeply committed to co-creating safe and inclusive spaces for meaningful conversations around governance, policy, ethical leadership, and the role of active citizenry in shaping Africa’s future” - said Shaunei.

Futurelect stands poised as an educational tool and a transformative platform dedicated to shaping responsible leaders who will reshape tomorrow across Africa. By leading the conversation around active citizenship through innovative technology and inclusive practices, the organisation aims to cultivate a generation ready to engage meaningfully in shaping their societies. Futurelect is always eager to explore high-level collaborations across Africa and the globe, forging partnerships that amplify our mission and drive transformative change. 🌍



Governance Through Civic-Tech Innovation and Transparency

By Bem Abubakar

Images by
Yusuf Kayode

Civic Hive, founded in 2017 by the Nigerian non-profit organization BudgIT, stands as a leading civic tech hub dedicated to tackling the pressing social and governance challenges faced by Nigerians. Recognising the need for innovative solutions in a rapidly evolving digital landscape, Civic Hive has created a vibrant and collaborative environment that encourages the development of civic technologies aimed at improving the lives of citizens. The hub fosters innovation while also serving as a crucial nexus for stakeholders, including technologists, civil society organisations, policymakers, and community advocates, to come together and share ideas, resources, and strategies. This collective effort has been instrumental in promoting transparency, enhancing public accountability, and fostering deeper citizen engagement in governance processes, thereby empowering individuals to play a more active role in shaping their communities and the nation as a whole.

Since its inception, Civic Hive has made remarkable progress in fostering innovative solutions addressing pressing societal issues. With a steadfast commitment to improving governance, social justice, and civic engagement, Civic Hive has successfully incubated over 40 startups that tackle various dimensions of civic life. These startups are not only focused on enhancing communication between citizens and government but

also on creating platforms that empower individuals and communities to voice their concerns and participate actively in the democratic process. In addition to these startups, Civic Hive has extended its support to more than 115 civic organisations, equipping them with essential resources and technological tools that enable them to amplify their impact. By providing training, mentorship, and access to critical networks, Civic Hive is enhancing the effectiveness of these organisations and ensuring they can implement their initiatives with greater efficiency and reach.

The transformative efforts of Civic Hive have significantly reshaped the landscape of civil society engagement in Nigeria. By facilitating access to vital information and promoting the development of data-driven solutions, Civic Hive is not only bridging the gap between citizens and governance structures but also fostering an environment where informed and engaged citizenry can thrive. This approach encourages collaboration among diverse groups, including government agencies, non-profit organisations, and community members, ultimately leading to a more participatory governance model. Civic Hive's initiatives are instrumental in cultivating a culture of accountability, where citizens are empowered to hold their leaders responsible and participate in decision-making processes. As a result, these efforts contribute to sustainable

development and social progress in Nigeria, laying the groundwork for a more just and equitable society where every voice is heard, and every citizen has the opportunity to contribute to the nation's democratic fabric.

Civic Hive is dedicated to promoting transparency and open governance by leveraging technology. The organisation focuses on identifying critical civic challenges and provides support to innovators who create data-centric solutions aimed at connecting governmental bodies with citizens. This initiative has established a dynamic environment that nurtures technology-driven civic initiatives. As a result, civic organisations, human rights advocates, and activists are empowered to drive change and ensure that government institutions are held accountable for their actions.

Civic Hive is well-known for its impactful initiative, the Civic Tech Fellowship, which focuses on enhancing transparency and advocacy efforts. This fellowship offers emerging civic-tech leaders valuable resources such

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as mentorship, skills development, and networking opportunities that are crucial for their professional growth. Participants in the program include a diverse group of individuals, from legal professionals to specialists in open data, all of whom are equipped to create viable civic-tech solutions. Among the successful ventures that have emerged from the Civic Tech Fellowship is Citizens Gavel, established by Nelson Olanipekun. This platform delivers pro bono legal assistance and leverages technology to expedite the legal process. Another significant initiative is Hope Behind Bars Africa, founded by Funke Adeoye, which champions justice reform by offering legal support to incarcerated individuals. Since its launch, Hope Behind Bars Africa has positively impacted the lives of over nine thousand people.

Civic Hive also leads efforts to integrate technology into civic processes. Through platforms such as LiveResult, launched in 2023, Civic Hive has revolutionized how Nigerians interact with election results. The platform offers real-time visualization of results, increasing transparency and reducing time spent on collating election data. These technological solutions are particularly important in ensuring public trust in governance and promoting transparency in political processes.

Moreover, Civic Hive has played an active role in shaping Nigeria's civic-tech landscape by participating in crucial governance dialogues. It has engaged in public hearings on Electoral Reforms at the National Assembly and contributed to discussions around policy reform aimed at

improving transparency and accountability. The formation of the Nigeria CivicTech Working Group, a platform initiated by Civic Hive, exemplifies the organization's commitment to collaborative governance solutions. Through this working group, Civic Hive has facilitated conversations between civic-tech organisations and the Ministry of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy, leading to collaborative efforts that foster a more inclusive and transparent governance system.

In addition to its tech innovations, Civic Hive is heavily involved in grassroots advocacy. One of its prominent initiatives, the Active Citizens Hangout, brings together civic actors to educate them on utilizing Freedom of Information (FOI) letters, open data, and policy analysis to demand government accountability. These efforts reflect Civic Hive's broader mission to empower citizens with the tools and knowledge they need to engage effectively in governance and hold public institutions accountable.

Civic Hive's support extends beyond capacity building and grassroots advocacy; it also prioritizes mentorship. Mentorship is integral to the success of the Civic Tech Fellowship, where experienced civic leaders guide fellows in refining their projects and expanding their impact. This mentorship ensures that civic-tech projects are not only innovative but also sustainable and scalable, ensuring long-term success. Civic Hive is taking significant steps in the field of education and training by providing its fellows and

the broader civic community with essential modern skills. One of its latest initiatives focused on educating participants about the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in governance and the delivery of public services. This program underscores Civic Hive's dedication to embracing technological progress and equipping its fellows with the knowledge to effectively utilise innovative tools in their civic activities.

Despite these successes, Civic Hive faces several challenges, particularly in navigating Nigeria's political environment, where resistance to transparency and accountability is common. Public institutions often push back against initiatives that promote open governance, and securing sustainable funding for long-term civic-tech projects remains a hurdle. Furthermore, the low digital literacy in some communities limits the outreach and impact of tech-driven civic solutions. However, Civic Hive has addressed these challenges by building strategic partnerships with local and international organizations that provide technical support, funding, and programmatic collaborations.

Collaboration remains at the core of Civic Hive's success. Over the years, the organization has built alliances with civil society organizations (CSOs), media outlets, and international partners to amplify its impact. These partnerships have enabled Civic Hive to scale its programs and reach a broader audience, thus promoting civic engagement on a wider scale. Some of the organization's key partners include YIAGA Africa, Invictus Africa, Africa Comicate, and Enough is Enough (EiE) Nigeria. Civic Hive is setting its sights on a broader horizon, aiming to broaden its reach beyond Nigeria. The organization plans to roll out its Civic Tech Fellowship program throughout West Africa, with the ultimate goal of expanding its impact across the entire continent. This initiative is designed to empower civic innovators in various African nations, promoting a collective effort towards transparency, accountability, and enhanced public engagement. Additionally, Civic Hive is seeking to strengthen partnerships with governmental bodies to ensure that civic technology solutions are effectively incorporated into public sector operations.



In densely populated townships and informal settlements, a single spark can quickly escalate into a devastating fire, destroying homes, uprooting families, and deepening existing development challenges. With limited resources and fragile infrastructure, these communities often lack the means to rebuild or recover quickly. Families lose everything they've worked for, including personal belongings, documents, and sometimes even their source of income.

The emotional toll is immense, with parents struggling to provide for their children in the wake of such a disaster, and vulnerable individuals left without shelter or safety. For children, the consequences are particularly harsh—many are unable to attend school, losing valuable time in their education. In some cases, they even risk losing an entire academic year due to the disruption. The lack of proper sanitation and medical support further exacerbates the hardship, and the emotional trauma caused by such events can have lasting effects on their mental well-being. In the aftermath, families are left stranded, livelihoods disrupted, and hope diminished.

Addressing this critical issue, Mosebe Enterprise has emerged as a centre for innovation, offering clean renewable energy solutions designed not only to mitigate fire outbreaks but also to empower underserved communities with sustainable, life-changing technologies across South Africa. Mosebe Enterprise was founded by Vincent Mosebe in 2023, motivated by a bold vision inspired by his personal journey and a desire to make a tangible impact.

Mosebe Enterprise was founded with a deep commitment to addressing the energy challenges faced by underserved communities. Having witnessed firsthand

Mosebe Enterprise on Sustainable Energy Solutions for Communities

By Busiswa Lutshaba

Images by SAB

the harsh realities of energy poverty, Vincent Mosebe felt compelled to take action. The lack of reliable energy in townships and informal settlements stifles opportunity, hinders development, and deepens the cycle of poverty. This exposure to the devastating impacts of energy scarcity drove Vincent's desire to create meaningful change, inspiring him to develop renewable energy solutions that are tailored to meet the unique challenges of these communities. By focusing on providing sustainable, reliable, and safe energy sources, Mosebe Enterprise aims to empower residents and contribute to solving the broader energy issues faced by South Africa and other parts of Africa.

The enterprise currently offers three innovative energy solutions through devices that:

- 1) provide uninterrupted power,
- 2) help mitigate the spread of diseases like malaria, and
- 3) reduce the risk and spread of fires.

The devices, called "Tshepo"—which means "hope" in Setswana symbolise the aspirations Mosebe Enterprise seeks to bring to marginalised communities. "The device embodies hope for a future where everyone has access to clean, affordable energy and safer living conditions," says Vincent Mosebe.

Mosebe Enterprise has emerged as a centre for innovation, offering clean renewable energy solutions designed not only to mitigate fire outbreaks but also to empower underserved communities with sustainable, life-changing technologies across South Africa.



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Mosebe Enterprise is committed to equipping underserved communities with the knowledge needed to embrace renewable energy. Through workshops and training sessions, residents learn to use devices like Tshepo effectively. Partnering with local leaders and NGOs, the enterprise conducts demonstrations and distributes informational materials highlighting the benefits of clean energy and proper usage practices. By fostering understanding and buy-in, these efforts ensure that communities not only adopt these innovations but also sustain their use over the long term.

SCALING IMPACT: GROWTH AND EXPANSION EFFORTS

Growth has been a key focus for Mosebe Enterprise as they strive to broaden their reach and serve more townships. Significant milestones, such as powering Wi-Fi towers in Khayelitsha, demonstrate their ability to adapt and scale. Future plans include expanding production and establishing local partnerships to enhance distribution networks. With each step,

the enterprise moves closer to fulfilling its mission of transforming underserved communities through accessible and sustainable energy solutions.

Participating in recent pitching competitions, such as the SAB Social Innovation Competition, has been a significant milestone for Mosebe Enterprise. Finishing third in the competition not only highlighted the impact of their work but also attracted valuable attention from potential partners.

"This achievement has boosted our profile, providing us with the exposure needed to secure more resources and partnerships," Vincent explains. By leveraging this recognition, Mosebe Enterprise aims to accelerate its efforts to scale production, enhance distribution, and expand its reach to serve even more underserved communities with innovative renewable energy solutions.

NAVIGATING POLICY AND OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Despite their progress, Mosebe Enterprise faces challenges, particularly around regulatory compliance and sourcing materials. Navigating complex policies requires collaboration with legal and technical experts to ensure their



manufacturing and distribution processes align with local and national standards. These hurdles, though significant, have fueled the enterprise's commitment to resilience and innovation, as they continue championing sustainable development in underserved communities.

ADVANCING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Tshepo V2 model, one of three devices is a game-changer in public health and safety. Beyond its renewable energy capabilities, the device incorporates innovative pest control features targeting mosquitoes and flies—primary carriers of life-threatening diseases. By proactively reducing mosquito and fly-borne illnesses, the Tshepo V2 significantly enhances community well-being and fosters a safer living environment. This dual-purpose functionality underscores Mosebe Enterprise's commitment to holistic solutions, addressing both immediate safety concerns and long-term public health challenges.

ESG AT THE CORE

“At Mosebe Enterprise, ESG is more than just a framework; it's the foundation of everything we do. It drives our decisions and inspires us to prioritise long-term sustainability, social equity, and responsible governance. By staying true to these principles, we're not only creating innovative solutions but ensuring that our

work benefits both people and the planet. For us, it's about building a legacy of impact that extends far beyond the devices we produce,” says Vincent Mosebe.

PARTNERSHIPS AND FUTURE VISION

Partnerships play a pivotal role in Mosebe Enterprise's journey. Collaborations with NGOs, local governments, and international organisations have been instrumental in driving clean energy initiatives. “These partnerships not only amplify our impact but also support policy advocacy efforts to promote renewable energy access in underserved areas. By working with like-minded stakeholders, we are laying the groundwork for long-term success,” Vincent emphasises.

The success of Mosebe Enterprise is not only a reflection of visionary leadership but also the strength of its dedicated team. Vincent Mosebe, the founder, provides the vision and direction, grounded in a deep personal understanding of the challenges faced by underserved communities. However, the realisation of this vision would not be possible without the expertise and passion of his team members: Leandro Antonio, the Marketing Director, and Donovan Pedzai, the Chief Operations Officer.

Leandro's strategic guidance in outreach and branding has been pivotal in spreading awareness about the enterprise's mission, creating a strong public presence and

engagement with potential partners. His efforts ensure that the message of empowerment through renewable energy reaches as many people as possible, drawing attention to the pressing issues of energy access and fire prevention in underserved communities.

Donovan, on the other hand, oversees operations with precision, ensuring that the solutions delivered are both scalable and sustainable. His attention to detail and operational expertise have been key in maintaining the efficiency of the enterprise's solutions, from product development to distribution.

What makes this team so effective is their shared commitment to the core values of Mosebe Enterprise: sustainability, social equity, and empowerment. Each member brings a unique skill set, but they are all driven by a collective belief in the transformative power of renewable energy. This alignment in values has created a strong, unified team dynamic where each person not only complements the others' strengths but also shares in the passion to solve one of South Africa's most pressing challenges.

Their ability to collaborate seamlessly has been key to the rapid development of Mosebe Enterprise. From overcoming obstacles to celebrating milestones, such as powering Wi-Fi towers in Khayelitsha or participating in pitching competitions, the team's cohesion has allowed the enterprise to grow and scale its impact quickly. Together, they have built an organisation that is greater than the sum of its parts—proving that when a team shares a common vision and works harmoniously towards a shared goal, extraordinary things can be achieved.

Looking ahead, Mosebe Enterprise envisions scaling its solutions across South Africa and beyond. Their mission extends beyond energy, aiming to create sustainable ecosystems where communities are empowered through education, economic growth, and innovative technologies. By aligning their efforts with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Mosebe Enterprise remains steadfast in its commitment to creating lasting change, fostering resilient communities, and advancing a more sustainable and equitable future for all. 



HEDA:

Alleviating Corruption through Advocacy for Justice

By Bem Abubakar Images by Heda Resource Centre

Since its founding, HEDA Resource Centre has stood as a relentless advocate for accountability, good governance, and human rights across Nigeria. Through initiatives like the Anti-Corruption Situation Room (ACSR) and its broader campaigns, HEDA has crafted a powerful narrative focused on transparency and systemic reform. Let's explore some of the most impactful projects that have emerged from HEDA's mission and how they've shaped the fight for a more just and equitable Nigeria. Launched in 2017, HEDA's Anti-Corruption Situation Room has been instrumental in driving national conversations on governance and transparency. By providing a dedicated platform where activists, policymakers, and stakeholders can address pressing issues such as electoral reform, environmental

justice, and sustainable development, ACSR has become a hub for critical dialogue and meaningful change. With 37 editions to date and over 100 speakers, ACSR's reach has expanded significantly, gathering over 2,500 participants in discussions that confront corruption and strengthen democratic institutions. These discussions don't just remain theoretical; they influence real-world policy decisions and raise awareness across diverse sectors of Nigerian society.

Corruption in Nigeria is an issue that has pervaded various facets of society, often leading to the exploitation of public resources for personal gain. This systemic corruption can overshadow the efforts of individuals who strive to uphold integrity and transparency in their actions. However, organisations like the Human



and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA) are actively working to shift the narrative by recognising and celebrating those who resist the temptations of corrupt practices. One of the hallmark initiatives of HEDA is the Gani Fawehinmi Impact and Integrity Award (GFIIA), which pays tribute to the legacy of the late Gani Fawehinmi—a prominent anti-corruption advocate, lawyer, and social reformer. By honouring individuals who exemplify strong ethical standards in both the public and private sectors, the GFIIA not only acknowledges their contributions but also aims to inspire others to adhere to similar principles.



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The GFIIA operates through a transparent process of public nominations and voting, allowing citizens to participate in identifying individuals who make a positive impact in their communities while maintaining high ethical standards. This initiative serves a dual purpose: it uplifts the recognised nominees, providing them with a platform to share their stories and inspire others, and it reinforces the message that integrity is attainable even in a challenging environment rife

with corruption. By spotlighting these exemplary figures, the award acts as a powerful reminder that ethical behaviour should be the norm rather than the exception. Ultimately, the Gani Fawehinmi Impact and Integrity Award contribute to a broader movement advocating for accountability and transparency, fostering a culture where integrity is not only celebrated but also expected and pursued by all Nigerians. HEDA's Compendium of 100 High Profile Corruption Cases serves as a crucial resource in Nigeria's fight against economic crimes. Published annually since 2017, this compendium details ongoing corruption cases involving Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs), offering transparency in an often murky system. The compendium's eighth edition, launched in October 2024, continues to hold Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs) accountable by keeping a spotlight on these cases. It also serves as a valuable research tool for institutions, NGOs, and the public, highlighting the persistent issue of corruption in Nigeria's political landscape.

There's a common saying: "When you fight corruption, corruption fights back." This has been a harsh reality for HEDA, as the organisation and its leaders have faced physical and digital threats. In one particularly chilling incident, HEDA's chairman was targeted by political assassins, and the organisation experienced significant data breaches.

Despite these setbacks, HEDA remained undeterred. The organisation responded by enhancing security measures and fortifying data protection protocols. These actions have ensured that HEDA can continue its mission, proving that resilience is just as critical as advocacy in the fight for good governance.

HEDA understands that systemic change requires collaboration. Over the years, the organisation has strategically engaged with government agencies and NGOs to advance policies that promote accountability and transparency. Through advocacy visits and workshops, HEDA partners with Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), ensuring that officials not only understand the importance of these reforms but also feel a sense of ownership in implementing them. This partnership-driven approach makes it easier to enforce policies over the long term, cementing the role of transparency in public sector operations.

As part of its broader commitment to democratic accountability, HEDA has placed a strong focus on electoral reform. Its publication, "The 2023 General Elections: Trends in Politics and Elections in Nigeria," provided data-driven insights that spurred public debate on the state of Nigeria's electoral system. In addition to research, HEDA engages in voter education and advocacy campaigns to prevent electoral malpractice, pushing for more transparent and fair elections.

SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE


By observing elections and monitoring irregularities, the organisation plays a key role in ensuring the integrity of Nigeria's democratic processes.

Beyond governance and corruption, the Human Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA) has made significant strides in climate change advocacy and environmental justice, positioning itself as a leader in promoting sustainable practices in Nigeria. The organisation has engaged in high-level dialogues with a diverse array of stakeholders, ranging from government officials to local community leaders, resulting in actionable commitments aimed at addressing the unique vulnerabilities faced by at-risk communities. By advocating for more robust and sustainable environmental policies, HEDA has been instrumental in holding oil companies accountable for their role in environmental degradation. The organisation's efforts underscore a crucial principle: that Nigeria's development should not come at the expense of its most vulnerable citizens, who often bear the brunt of climate change impacts and environmental exploitation.

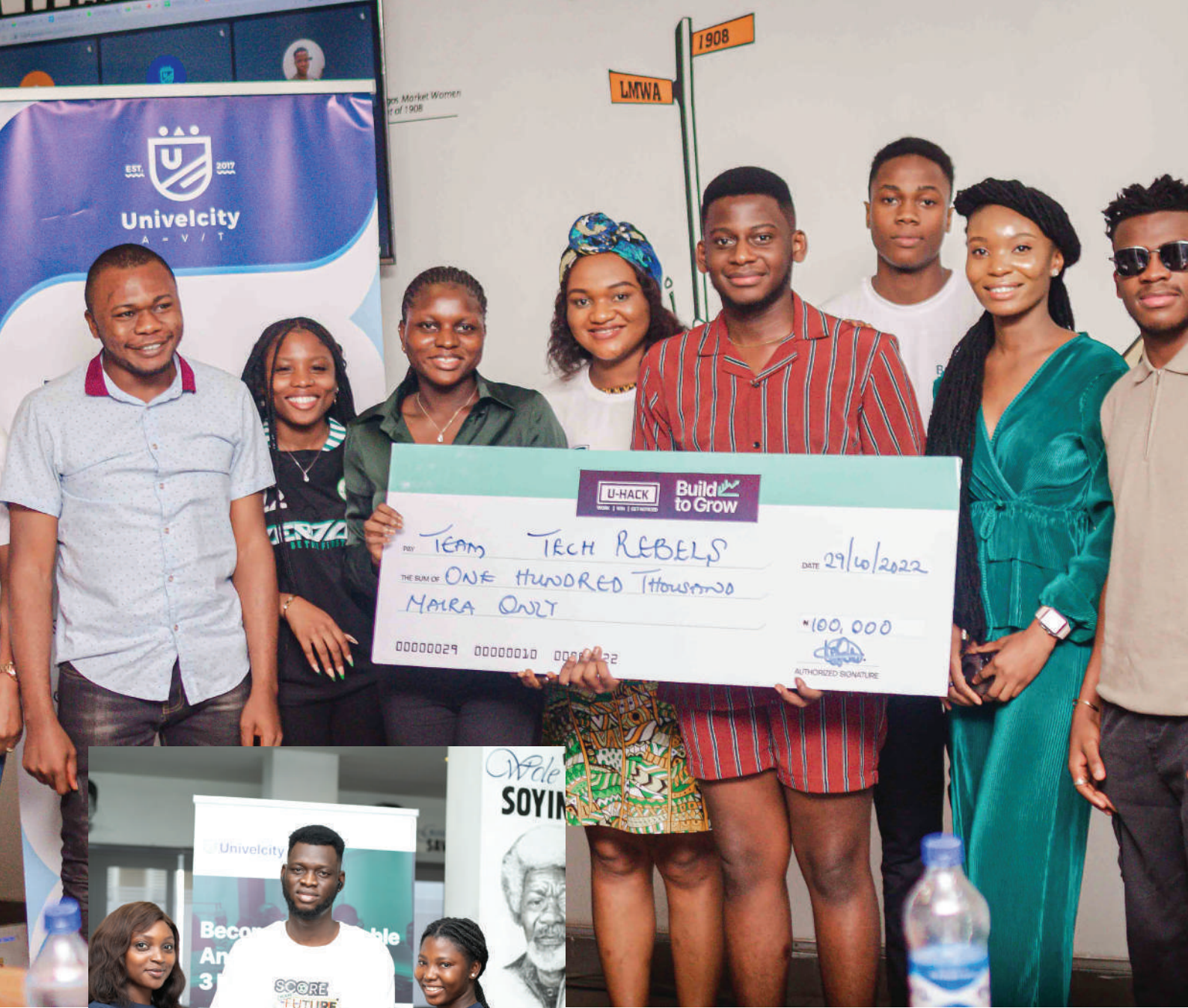
HEDA's extensive work in climate change advocacy is reflected in its climate-

smart response programs, which have reached over 9,000 beneficiaries across 86 communities in 26 states. These programs are designed to empower communities by providing them with the knowledge and resources needed to adapt to the challenges posed by climate change. Participants learn sustainable agricultural practices, effective water management techniques, and strategies for disaster preparedness, all of which contribute to building resilience against environmental shocks. This commitment to environmental justice and sustainable development is not only crucial for the immediate well-being of these communities but also serves as a model for broader national and global efforts to combat climate change. HEDA's initiatives exemplify how grassroots movements can drive meaningful change and ensure that the voices of those most affected by environmental issues are heard and prioritised in the dialogue around climate policy.

At the heart of HEDA's mission is the empowerment of everyday citizens. The organisation's Toll-Free Line and educational campaigns equip Nigerians with the tools they need to hold leaders accountable. HEDA has consistently

partnered with local civil society groups to ensure its message reaches diverse communities. By mobilising citizens to report corruption and demand transparency, HEDA fosters a culture of accountability from the ground up. Research has always been central to HEDA's work. Publications like the Compendium of 100 High Profile Corruption Cases and Leadership Approval Rating (LAR) provide the data needed to advocate for systemic reform. This research-driven approach doesn't just expose corruption; it shapes policies and influences governance at both national and international levels. As HEDA looks ahead, its key priorities include expanding its efforts to promote accountability, transparency, and human rights. By continuing to empower citizens, advocating for environmental justice, and fostering strong partnerships with local and international organisations, HEDA is set to lead Nigeria into a future where governance is transparent, and leadership is accountable to the people. Through a combination of research, advocacy, and direct action, HEDA ensures that the fight against corruption is ongoing and that the principles of good governance remain at the heart of Nigeria's democratic processes. 





Univelcity:

Bridging Nigeria's Tech Skills Gap to Foster Accountability and Governance

Imagine a learning space where young Nigerians aren't just gaining skills but actively crafting solutions for real-world issues. That's what Univelcity offers—turning tech education into a powerful tool for addressing challenges in governance, social impact, and innovation. By focusing on practical, project-driven training, Univelcity helps aspiring technologists build the expertise they need to reshape industries, solve critical local problems, and drive Nigeria forward in the global tech landscape. Their mission is about more than just skills—it's about nurturing the next generation of leaders ready to make a tangible difference.

Univelcity is dedicated to advancing technological education in Nigeria by providing individuals with essential skills for developing meaningful solutions. Its curriculum encompasses key areas such

By Bem Abubakar

Images by Univelcity Media Team

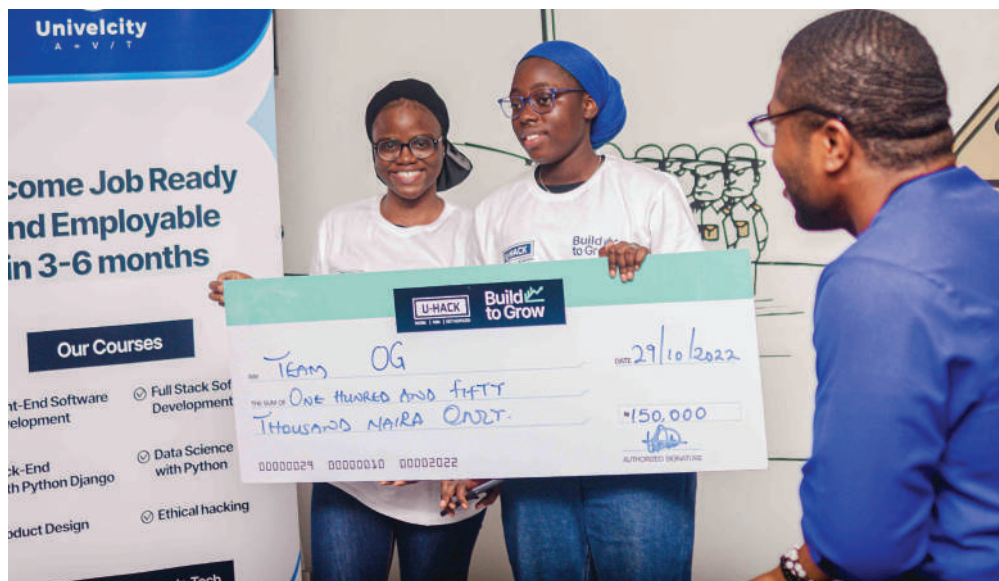
SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE

as software engineering, data analytics, user interface (UI) / user experience (UX) design, and cybersecurity. As a result, Univelcity has become an integral contributor to the growing tech landscape in Nigeria.

The development of these competencies extends beyond individual or career advancement; it plays a crucial role in confronting Nigeria's most significant issues. For example, Univelcity is contributing to solutions for governance and transparency challenges by equipping young individuals with expertise in data analytics. This education enables graduates to create innovative technological solutions, such as data visualisation tools, open-source applications, and robust systems that enhance transparency and accountability across both governmental and private sectors.

Univelcity is committed to more than merely delivering technology education; it seeks to transform the way technology influences governance. Through a hands-on, project-driven curriculum, students are motivated to create tangible solutions that tackle the issues of transparency in Nigeria. This experiential learning approach equips students to develop mobile applications, digital platforms, and innovative tools designed for monitoring government expenditure, facilitating citizen feedback, and ensuring secure record-keeping via blockchain technology. A notable achievement from Univelcity is the creation of a civic technology platform by a team of alumni. This platform empowers citizens to oversee government initiatives in real-time, enhancing transparency by providing insights into budget allocations and project timelines. By utilising such technological advancements, Nigerian citizens gain the ability to hold their leaders accountable, fostering a culture of responsibility and integrity within governance systems.

Collaboration is key to Univelcity's success, and the organisation actively works with NGOs, civic tech organisations, and government agencies to promote transparency. For example, in partnership with BudgIT, Univelcity developed an AI solution that automates



public data requests and analysis. This tool improves access to public financial data, enabling citizens and journalists to more easily scrutinise government finances and decision-making. These collaborations are often rooted in real-world challenges, with students and graduates working on hackathons or targeted projects aimed at solving specific governance problems. By fostering such partnerships, Univelcity is ensuring that the tech solutions developed within its walls have a tangible impact on Nigeria's public service sector.

Univelcity is centred around a strong commitment to fostering innovation. The organisation creates an environment where students can explore new ideas, promoting the development of technological solutions aimed

at enhancing public services. From streamlining administrative processes to improving communication between citizens and government, and refining data collection for informed decision-making, Univelcity nurtures a culture of innovation that contributes to more effective and transparent governance. Through its initiatives, Univelcity not only equips young Nigerians with the skills necessary for success in the tech sector but also empowers them to become agents of change in public service and governance. The significance of technology in promoting transparency is immense; it facilitates greater access to information and renders processes subject to public examination, fundamentally changing the operations of governments and corporations alike.

Univelcity is dedicated to advancing technological education in Nigeria by providing individuals with essential skills for developing meaningful solutions.

Univelcity is at the forefront of this transformative movement by preparing the upcoming generation of tech leaders who recognise the critical role technology plays in serving the public good. Through immersive, hands-on training, Univelcity ensures that its graduates possess the expertise needed to create tools and platforms that enhance accountability. Whether entering government roles, working in non-governmental organisations, or launching startups, Univelcity alumni are instrumental in shaping a future characterised by governance that is more transparent, responsive, and accountable to the people it serves.

Univelcity's initiatives go beyond simply training individuals; they play a vital role in promoting governance and transparency within Nigeria's rapidly evolving startup landscape. By collaborating with initiatives such as the Civic Hive Fellowship, Univelcity supports Civic Tech Fellows in developing Minimum Viable Products (MVPs) for their entrepreneurial concepts. These programs are designed for entrepreneurs aiming to incorporate governance principles at the core of their businesses. The emphasis


on transparency is essential in the startup realm. As Nigeria's technology ecosystem continues to expand, ethical and transparent operations are crucial for fostering trust among consumers and stakeholders. Univelcity prioritises governance, ensuring that its graduates are not only proficient in technical skills but also possess a strong sense of social responsibility.

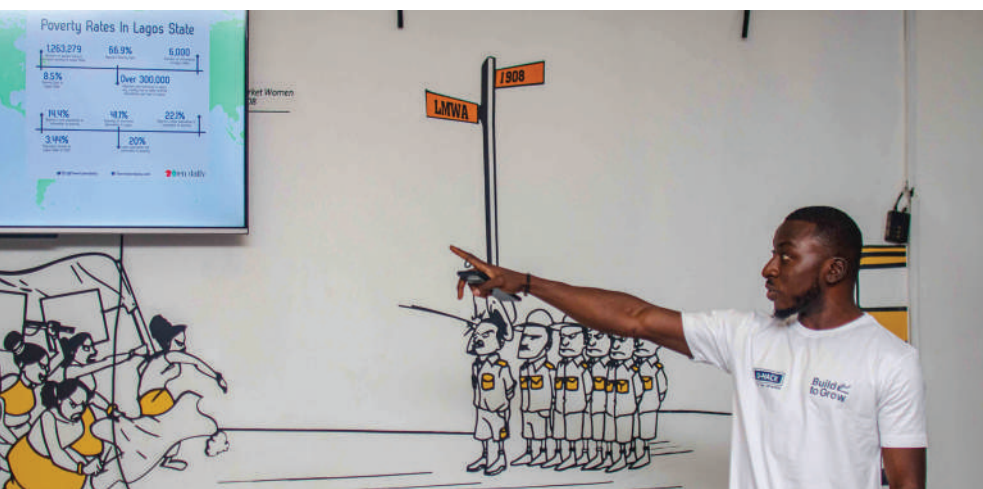
As we look to the future, Univelcity is dedicated to broadening its educational offerings by introducing targeted programs that centre around civic technology and public sector innovation. Recognising the critical role that technology plays in modern governance, these specialised courses are designed to equip professionals and public servants with essential skills tailored to the digital age. By focusing on areas such as blockchain for accountability, data-driven governance, and the integration of artificial intelligence in public service, Univelcity aims to foster a new generation of leaders who can leverage technology to promote transparency, efficiency, and citizen engagement in government operations. This forward-thinking approach not only addresses the immediate needs of the public sector but also anticipates the evolving challenges that come with an increasingly digital society.

University's commitment to enhancing tech education in Nigeria positions it as a leader in the country's burgeoning tech landscape. By offering courses that blend technical knowledge with practical applications in governance, Univelcity is not only addressing the skills gap in the public sector but also encouraging innovative thinking among its students. As the demand for tech-savvy professionals in government rises, these



programs will empower participants to implement solutions that drive positive change within their communities. Furthermore, the incorporation of emerging technologies in the curriculum reflects a proactive stance on the part of Univelcity, ensuring that its graduates are well-prepared to navigate the complexities of modern governance and contribute meaningfully to the development of a more accountable and responsive public sector.

Tech education is playing a transformative role in Nigeria's governance and corporate sectors. As more tech-savvy individuals enter these fields, we are seeing increased adoption of digital solutions aimed at fighting corruption, improving service delivery, and ensuring that both governments and companies are more responsive to citizens' needs. Univelcity is at the forefront of this transformation. By providing young Nigerians with the skills and knowledge needed to build tech-driven solutions, the organisation is helping to create a future where transparency, accountability, and good governance are not just ideals but realities. Through its emphasis on real-world applications, collaboration with NGOs and government bodies, and fostering innovation, Univelcity is paving the way for a brighter, more transparent future for Nigeria. 





VathyM Pageants Academy: Shaping Future Leaders

By Busiswa Lutshaba

Images by VathyM Pageants Academy

In a world grappling with rising crime rates, high unemployment, and the distressing reality of missing children, VathyM Pageants Academy is taking proactive steps to ensure the safety and security of youth. The academy not only provides young women with a platform to showcase their talents, but also fosters a secure environment for personal growth. It serves as a sanctuary where confidence, discipline, and community engagement flourish. By

equipping participants with essential life skills, the academy is shaping future leaders not only within the pageant realm but also empowering them to become positive change-makers in society, offering a safe space in which they can dream, grow, and succeed.

VathyM Pageants Academy was established in 2021 in the Eastern Cape, where its founder observed that young people in the area were aimlessly wandering after school, lacking extracurricular activities or educational resources to engage them. Motivated by this troubling situation, she took it upon herself to initiate a change. Starting with a small group of girls, she garnered the support and endorsement of their parents to kick off the initiative. This initiative aimed to redirect children away from the streets while instilling both discipline and confidence, both on the runway and in real life. Through the support of parents and the community, the academy was formally launched and warmly received.

The training provided at VathyM Pageants Academy covers all aspects of pageant competitions, including interview techniques, talent presentation, stage presence, and overall personal development. This comprehensive approach is essential for the growth of young learners and the wider community. As part of their development, beneficiaries are given responsibilities that contribute to their experiential learning, such as organising charity events, picnics, and logistical planning—key elements of event management. With guidance from their facilitator, participants are encouraged to develop leadership skills, promote active citizenship, and engage in collaborative efforts, all of which are vital to personal advancement through practice and application.

IMPACT BEYOND BORDERS

“From an early age, my love for travel instilled in me a profound understanding that opportunities aren’t always served on a platter—you have to create them,” the founder states. This mindset laid the groundwork for a significant milestone for the South Africa-based pageant academy.

“The idea took shape when I realised the academy had the potential to inspire beyond South Africa’s borders. I turned to Facebook in search of pageant academies in Botswana. After hours of browsing and reaching out, I connected with a director whose mission aligned perfectly with that of VathyM Pageants Academy. The next step was a leap of faith. I contacted her, shared our vision, and was thrilled when she agreed to host us,” she elaborates.

Before diving into the intricate planning for the girls’ visit to Botswana, the founder travelled there to meet with the director in person. This initial meeting

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highlighted the power of collaboration and the potential for positive change when participants stepped outside of their comfort zones.

“This trip demonstrated that physical borders are merely obstacles. True impact transcends boundaries, creating ripple effects that surpass our expectations,” the founder remarks. The experience in Botswana inspired everyone involved to dream bigger, think beyond borders, and recognise that the world truly is their stage. Furthermore, it provided a unique opportunity to immerse in a different culture, nurturing a profound appreciation for Botswana’s rich traditions and lifestyle. “The journey broadened our perspectives and helped forge enduring memories that will resonate for years to come,” she adds. This experience served as a poignant reminder of the substantial impact that cultural exchange and cross-border collaboration can have, leaving an imprint



solidified the collaboration between the two academies and paved the way for a transformative experience for all involved. Though the process brought its challenges, determination and teamwork ultimately led to success.

One significant obstacle was securing funding since many participants came from disadvantaged backgrounds, with some having never travelled before. The academy had to devise ways to raise funds for travel expenses and ensure all necessary documentation was arranged. Fortunately, the Western Cape Taxi Association generously covered a significant portion

of the costs, aided by additional support from the participants’ parents. This collaboration proved crucial in making the trip feasible, and the academy is deeply appreciative of the Cape Town Taxi Association for their contribution to this successful venture.

The Botswana experience marked a turning point. It was more than just an event; it became a platform for growth, connection, and shared impact. VathyM Pageants Academy’s influence extended beyond South Africa, leaving a lasting mark in Botswana. The trip not only strengthened the academy but also

on both the academy’s growth and the personal development of its participants.

The commitment to social impact extends beyond the pageant stage. Through various charity projects—including donating sanitary towels to schools and participating in environmental cleaning initiatives—the academy continues to effect change in the communities it serves. Many models have also established their own non-profit organisations, collaborating closely with the academy to tackle pressing social issues. This spirit of collaboration is a driving force in the academy’s outreach, as it actively seeks partnerships with other organisations to further its mission. 

Celebrating Excellence

in Kenya's Beverage Industry

By Staff Writer

Images by Kenya Beverage Excellence Awards (KBEA)



KENYA
BEVERAGE
EXCELLENCE
AWARDS

The Kenya Beverage Excellence Awards (KBEA) is a prestigious event dedicated to recognising and celebrating innovation and excellence across all sectors of the Kenyan beverage industry.

This vibrant industry encompasses a wide range of products, including both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, such as soft drinks, bottled water, energy drinks, fruit juices, dairy products, coffee, tea, sports drinks, and value-added water.

The KBEA aims to foster creativity and excellence in branding and packaging, creating a healthy competitive environment that benefits both businesses and consumers. By acknowledging outstanding achievements in these areas, the awards encourage companies to innovate and enhance their products, ultimately driving growth and innovation in the industry.







Empowering Democracy: Yiaga Africa's Journey to Strengthen Governance in Nigeria

By Bem Abubakar Images by Paul Madaki & Ifeanyi Mkpume

In Nigeria, where democratic promises often meet the harsh realities of systemic inertia, Yiaga Africa represents a rare, decisive force for reform. With a commitment rooted in action and accountability, the organisation has become a vital voice for those seeking not just democracy in name, but a governance that embodies fairness, transparency, and real citizen engagement. Since its inception, Yiaga Africa has spearheaded groundbreaking initiatives to elevate electoral integrity, confront entrenched political exclusion, and bridge the gap between policy and the everyday realities of Nigeria's citizens. Through rigorous research, tireless advocacy, and youth empowerment, the organisation is reshaping what democracy can mean—not just for Nigeria, but for a continent in search of sustainable leadership and governance.

Yiaga Africa's core mission revolves around creating a democracy that reflects the people's will, bolstered by the principles of inclusion, accountability, and justice. By conducting rigorous research and providing insightful

Yiaga Africa's core mission revolves around creating a democracy that reflects the people's will, bolstered by the principles of inclusion, accountability, and justice.

analysis, the organisation doesn't just identify problems—it crafts practical solutions. From training citizens to engage with governance processes to establishing platforms for advocacy, Yiaga's influence spans Nigeria's 36 states and all 774 Local Government Areas. These efforts form a support system aimed at transforming democracy at all levels. Yiaga Africa's efforts are anchored in improving Nigeria's electoral integrity. Although Nigeria has made strides in electoral reforms, challenges such as vote-buying, transparency lapses, and logistical inefficiencies still plague the system. In response, Yiaga has crafted a multifaceted approach to address these issues:

- 1. Watching The Vote Project:** Yiaga's flagship initiative, Watching the Vote, uses a large network of trained election observers to oversee every stage of the election process. From candidate selection to vote counting, Yiaga's observation methodology offers an unparalleled level of citizen engagement, giving voters the assurance that their choices matter.
- 2. Election Result Analysis Dashboard (ERAD):** Through ERAD, Yiaga Africa provides a real-time analysis of election results, displaying them in a user-friendly graphical format. This tool was crucial in recent Nigerian elections, as it allowed citizens to track vote counts and observe election integrity firsthand, enhancing transparency.
- 3. Electoral Reforms and Advocacy:** Advocating for legislative changes, such as the Electoral Act 2022,



is another critical component of Yiaga's work. This campaign has improved the legal framework governing elections and serves as a testament to Yiaga's influence on policy reform in Nigeria.

Youth participation in governance is a central pillar of Yiaga's approach. The organisation was born from the vision of young university students, and today, it empowers youth through initiatives like the Community Organizing Institute, which offers training in community leadership and grassroots organising. This annual event has cultivated nearly 400 activists, who apply their training to effect change in their communities. Yiaga Africa's Not Too Young To Run campaign was a landmark success, reshaping the political landscape for young Nigerians.

By reducing the age eligibility for political office, Yiaga opened doors for thousands of young Nigerians eager to make their mark in governance. The Convergence and ReadyToRun initiatives build on this momentum, providing technical support for young candidates and legislators as they embark on public service careers. In its pursuit of an inclusive democracy, Yiaga has actively championed the inclusion of women and people with disabilities in governance. The organisation emphasises creating a political environment where every demographic group has a voice. Collaborating with local and international partners, Yiaga develops programs to support marginalised communities, ensuring that their needs and perspectives are integrated into the governance process.



Yiaga Africa's commitment to local governance has produced another powerful initiative, the People's Assembly. This program brings citizens, communities, and local government leaders together to discuss the unique challenges facing each local government area. By inviting community members to identify priorities and develop actionable solutions, Yiaga enhances civic engagement and demonstrates a tangible model of democracy at work. Through the People's Assembly, citizens have a direct line to policymakers, fostering a collaborative approach to addressing social and economic issues at the grassroots level. Technology plays a central role in Yiaga's mission to enhance transparency and accessibility. With initiatives such as the Election Manipulation Risk Index (EMRI) and ERAD, Yiaga has embedded data-driven solutions into its work. EMRI, for instance, leverages statistical analysis to assess the likelihood of manipulation in specific election areas. This index has proven invaluable in curbing electoral fraud, and Yiaga's technological advancements have made it easier for citizens and stakeholders to trust the electoral process. Additionally, Yiaga is exploring the future impact of artificial intelligence on elections in Africa, organising convenings to address potential challenges and opportunities.

Yiaga Africa recognises the importance of international collaboration in its mission. Partnering with global organisations, Yiaga facilitates knowledge-sharing and brings valuable insights from electoral processes worldwide back to Nigeria. These alliances allow Yiaga to stay at the forefront of governance trends and apply best practices that address the unique challenges Nigeria faces.

Through study missions to other African nations, Yiaga not only learns from successful democratic practices but also builds solidarity with similar organisations across the continent. This collaborative approach strengthens Africa's collective efforts in achieving accountable governance, helping countries develop resilient systems that respond effectively to the needs of their people. Evaluating the effectiveness of its interventions is essential to Yiaga's mission. The organisation measures impact in a variety of ways, from tracking the success of youth-led campaigns and assessing citizen participation in local governance to evaluating electoral reforms. The People's Assembly, for example, offers qualitative insights into local governments' responsiveness, while initiatives like Watching the Vote provide quantitative data that reflects citizens' engagement with the electoral

process. These evaluations help Yiaga maintain its momentum and adapt its strategies to meet evolving governance challenges. They also reveal the lasting influence of Yiaga's initiatives, as the organisation continues to inspire a culture of active, responsible citizenship that holds leaders accountable and ensures governance works for the people.

With Nigeria's democracy at a crucial juncture, Yiaga Africa remains committed to driving forward its vision of a transparent, inclusive political system. From ongoing advocacy for electoral reforms to initiatives that bring technology into the voting process, Yiaga is building the foundations for sustainable democracy in Nigeria. The organisation's future plans include deepening citizen engagement, expanding grassroots initiatives, and championing legislative reforms to create a more accessible and equitable democratic landscape. Yiaga Africa's relentless commitment to fostering democratic values has created a ripple effect that extends beyond Nigeria, reaching into the broader African continent. The organisation's impact serves as a powerful reminder that sustainable democratic change requires the courage to confront systemic challenges, the innovation to leverage technology, and the resolve to inspire the next generation of leaders. 

THE RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN

RATE CARD

PLACEMENT	COST (BWP)	COST (ZAR)	COST (USD)
Front Cover + Photography	25,000.00	34,500.00	1,900.00
Inside Front Cover (IFC)	14,000.00	19,300.00	1,100.00
Back Cover	12,000.00	16,500.00	900.00
Inside Back Cover (IBC)	10,000.00	13,800.00	800.00
Double Spread	13,000.00	17,900.00	1,000.00
2 Page Feature	8,000.00	11,000.00	600.00
Full Page	6,000.00	8,200.00	500.00
Half Page	5,000.00	6,900.00	400.00
Quarter Page	4,000.00	5,500.00	300.00
Strip Ad	3,000.00	4,100.00	200.00
Business Card	1,000.00	1,300.00	100.00

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- The above rates exclude VAT & apply when the client provides own complete artwork.
- Graphic designing fee is P1500 per design regardless of size.
- Designing of adverts is FREE for signed long-term advertising contracts only DISCOUNT: - 3 months (5%), 6 months (10%), 9 months (15%), 12 months (20%)
- Designing of adverts starts only when a client has signed an advertising contract.
- Client MUST sign final proof as we will not be held liable where client has not done so.
- Black & white adverts represent half the rate for full colour adverts.
- Editorial coverage is given FREE and is subject to availability of space.
- The Responsible Citizen DOES NOT accept undue influence on its editorial independence.
- Accounts payable to Wise Leadership within 30 days of date of invoice





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Join a community dedicated to sustainable growth and ethical leadership. Advertise with us to reach an audience committed to making a difference.

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT

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