West Africa ON POINT

THE PINNACLE

Jan '26 Issue



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A SIGNIFICANT STRIDE GLOBALLY AND A POWERHOUSE

Discover the Rise of West Africa

A Spotlight on Innovation, Culture, and Leadership" Innovation in Tech and Business, Women of Impact, Leadership and Governance, Cultural Renaissance, Youth Empowerment, and Next-Gen Sustainability.



West Africa
ON POINT

West Africa On Point is a leading media and PR agency trusted by brands, creatives, and organizations across Africa. With a powerful digital reach and a highly engaged audience, we help our clients reach their target audience.

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3 ADVERTISEMENT & COMMERCIALS

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- Strategic promotion and Advertisement Ad placement



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THE PINNACLE

Discover the Rise of West Africa

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West Africa ON POINT

THE PINNACLE

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Editorial Note

This issue of The Pinnacle Magazine shines a light on "Discover the Rise of West Africa: A Spotlight on Innovation, Culture, and Leadership" Innovation in Tech and Business, Women of Impact, Leadership, and Governance,
Cultural Renaissance, Youth Empowerment, and
Next-Gen Sustainability.

The winds of change are blowing, and the traditional print media landscape is shifting beneath our feet. But we're not throwing in the towel just yet! With the introduction of THE PINNACLE MAGAZINE, we're breathing new life into the tried-and-true printing press model by displaying insights from the top minds shaping West Africa's future. And immerse yourself in the rich tapestry of our Cultural highlights - because creativity and heritage are the heartbeat of progress.

We're also embracing the digital age with both arms, leveraging the power of online PR to stay ahead of the curve. The old is gold, and the new is golden - we're mixing and matching to create a PR cocktail that's as effective as it is innovative.

West Africa's moment is now. From tech hubs buzzing with innovation to cultural movements redefining identity, the region is on the rise. In our latest issue, we're diving deep into the trends, trailblazers, and game-changers shaping the narrative in;
- Innovation in Tech and Business: Fintech disruptors, agritech pioneers, and startups reimagining commerce - get ahead of the curve.
- Women of Impact: Meet the fearless leaders breaking barriers and driving change across industries.
- Leadership and Governance: Insights from the movers and shakers steering West Africa toward prosperity.
- Cultural Renaissance: Art, music, fashion explore how creativity is fueling economic growth and global influence.
- Youth Empowerment: How the next generation is shaping the future with tech, activism, and entrepreneurship.
- Next-Gen Sustainability: Innovators tackling climate challenges and pushing for a greener tomorrow.

Get inspired, get informed, and join the conversation. The Pinnacle Magazine is more than a read - it's a movement.

I am proud of my partner the founder of West Africa On Point, John Adeleye Taiwo for creating an amazing platform where THE PINNACLE MAGAZINE could be a product, a profound gratification, and congratulations to all the team members, from our well-coordinated and amazing project manager, Adebola Titilola. All Copywriters, Asifat Oyewole, Cynthia Obinatu, Benita Oseremi Obajuobalo, The two brainbox graphics designers, Ifeoluwa Adedayo Oluwadamilola, and Uchegbu Chibuzo Stanley, the visual designer Ijimakinwa Olumide, We all go out of our way, multi task ourself out of many to produce this masterpiece.
We hope you'll join us on this journey - grab a copy and get into the authentic West African stories we've always wanted to share.

ILERIAYO SOLOMON OKUNROTIFA
Partner WAOP, Co-convenor, and editorial in chief



WOMEN OF IMPACT

The Custodian of Culture and it's Heritage

By Adebola Titilola

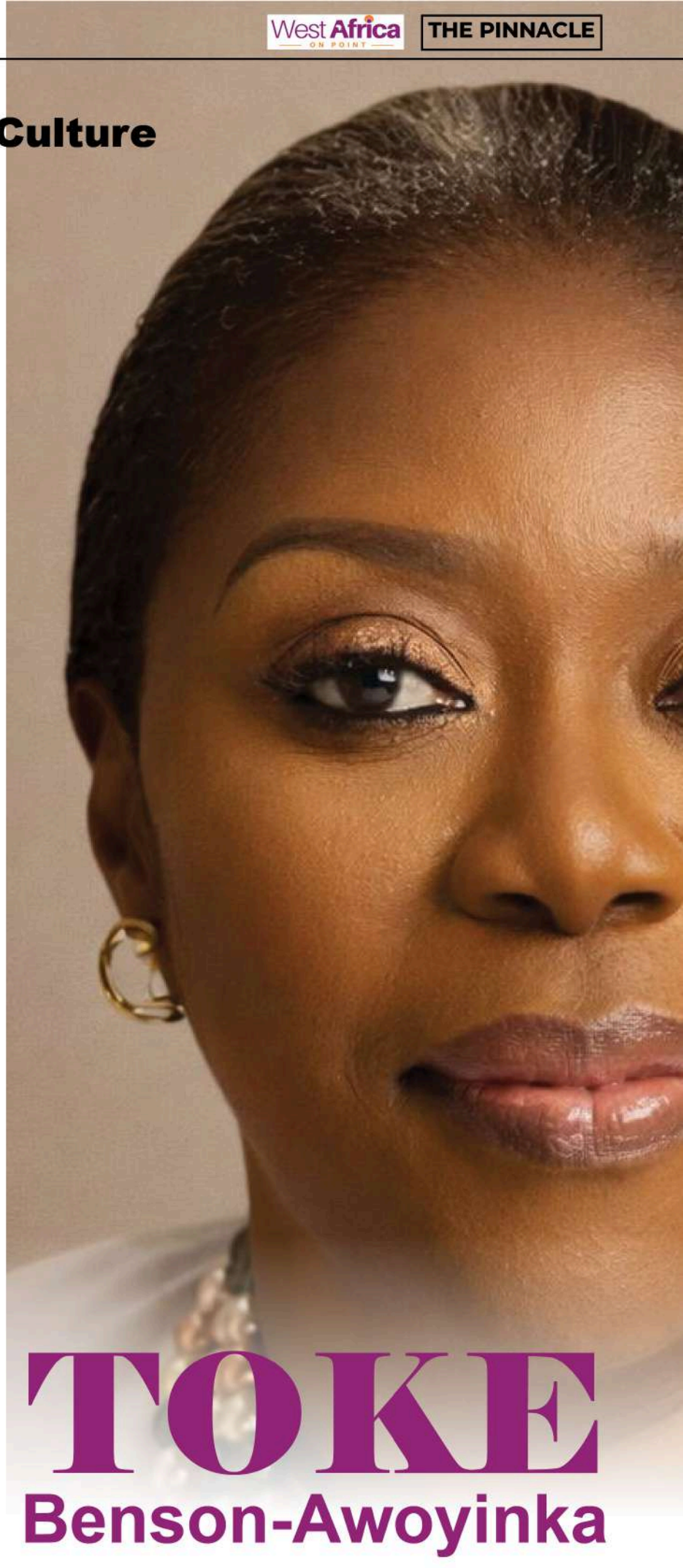
In an era where tradition is often overshadowed by the fast pace of globalization, Toke Benson-Awoyinka emerges as a woman who redefines cultural consciousness. Her career began in law and found full expression in public service, Toke Benson-Awoyinka's journey is marked by tenacity. A graduate of Lagos State University and a qualified legal practitioner since 1990, she built her legal foundation in insurance, litigation, and real estate law, holding her own in a male dominated space.

She was appointed Special Adviser on Housing to the Lagos State Governor in 2019. Her work focused on not just structures and spaces, but the lives of the people who would inhabit them. What truly sets Toke apart is her current role as Commissioner for Tourism, Arts, and Culture in Lagos State. A city like Lagos where culture and arts pulse in every corner, her job is to protect, promote, and reposition Lagos as Africa's creative capital. In her regime, the state has seen renewed interest in cultural preservation, from historic site revitalizations to festival partnerships and policies that elevate creatives.

She has come up with events like Lagos Fanti Carnival, Greater Lagos, Lagos Boat Regatta and so much more. Toke sees culture and art as a driver of economic growth and identity through initiatives like creative industry roundtables, cultural diplomacy projects, and tourism master plans, she is pushing Lagos onto the global stage.

Beyond her appointment, Toke is an advocate for women in leadership. She mentors rising female professionals, supports inclusion in governance, and opens doors she once had to push through herself.

"Lawyer, Policy maker, Reformer, Story-shaper and Creative, Toke Benson-Awoyinka is a woman of impact.



INNOVATION IN TECH AND BUSINESS

Chasing tech money? Here are 2025's top-paying non coding careers

By Adebola Titilola

Everyday, the tech industry continues to evolve and the demand for skilled professionals increases. With the way the tech industry is evolving, the career opportunities aren't limited to programmers and software engineers. In 2025, non-coding roles are proving just as lucrative, especially for those who combine creativity and strategy.

Here are some top-paying tech careers offering exciting opportunities for success without writing a single line of code.

UI/UX Designer

User Interface and User Experience Designers play a critical role in how users interact with digital products. They come up with intuitive layouts, optimize usability, and ensure that apps and websites are both beautiful and functional.

Companies are heavily invested in user experience to retain customers. A well-designed product directly impacts engagement and profitability.

Product Manager

As a Product Manager, you don't need to code but you must deeply understand tech products to shape development strategies, prioritize features, and ensure customer satisfaction. They act as the bridge between business, design, and engineering. PMs align teams, and manage million dollar products.

Technical Project Manager

Technical Project Managers oversee the planning, execution, and delivery of tech projects. They coordinate cross-functional teams and ensure that projects meet scope, timelines, and budgets. Because of how complex tech projects are, skilled project managers are needed to reduce risk and improve efficiency.

Product Marketing Manager

Product Marketing Managers act as storytellers. They craft the story around a tech product defining its market fit, launching campaigns, and driving adoption. PMMs sit at the intersection of product, sales, and marketing. Their work impacts revenue growth, making them highly valuable.

Content Marketer

Content marketers work closely with product and marketing teams to translate complex tech concepts into engaging blog posts, social media content, newsletters, and case studies. Their content helps build brand authority, drive website traffic, and generate leads. Tech companies with content marketers that communicate clearly and consistently tend to stand out and grow faster.

Financial Analyst

Financial analysts are responsible for forecasting growth, analyzing performance metrics, budgeting for new projects, and advising executives on financial strategy. They help companies make data backed investment decisions, scale efficiently, and remain profitable in fast-changing markets. Unlike traditional finance roles, analysts in tech must be agile and understand the business side of innovation.



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

MEET 5 YOUNG NIGERIANS DRIVING TRANSFORMATION

By Adebola Titilola

Nigeria is a country with vibrant youths brimming with potential. In every field from tech to communication to activism, young Nigerians are challenging old systems and building new realities. These five young leaders represent a generation of transformers refusing to be silenced or sidelined.

1. Hammed Adegoke

He is the founder of ProTeach, an education technology platform. This platform helps in tackling Nigeria's education gap one student at a time. His platform connects qualified tutors to learners in both urban and rural areas, using mobile tech. With Nigeria facing one of the world's highest rates of out-of-school children, Hammed's work is bridging the education divide while proving that youth-led innovation can solve old problems.



2. Rinu Oduala

Rinu rose to national prominence during the #EndSARS protests, emerging as a fierce advocate for police reform and youth inclusion. But her activism didn't end when the protests did as she has continued to challenge the political class, amplify voices on social justice, and educate her generation about governance and accountability. With a massive following on social media and a growing footprint in civic spaces, Rinu represents the kind of informed, fearless citizen Nigeria desperately needs.



3. Obi Ozor

Logistics in Nigeria is something most small business owners struggle with. Through Kobo360, a digital logistics platform, Obi has streamlined how goods move across West Africa reducing costs and improving efficiency for businesses. His company has expanded to other African countries, and his leadership continues to be a beacon for tech entrepreneurs hoping to scale. At such a young age m, Obi has created jobs, solved real infrastructural problems, and shown that African startups can lead globally.

4. Iyinoluwa Aboyeji

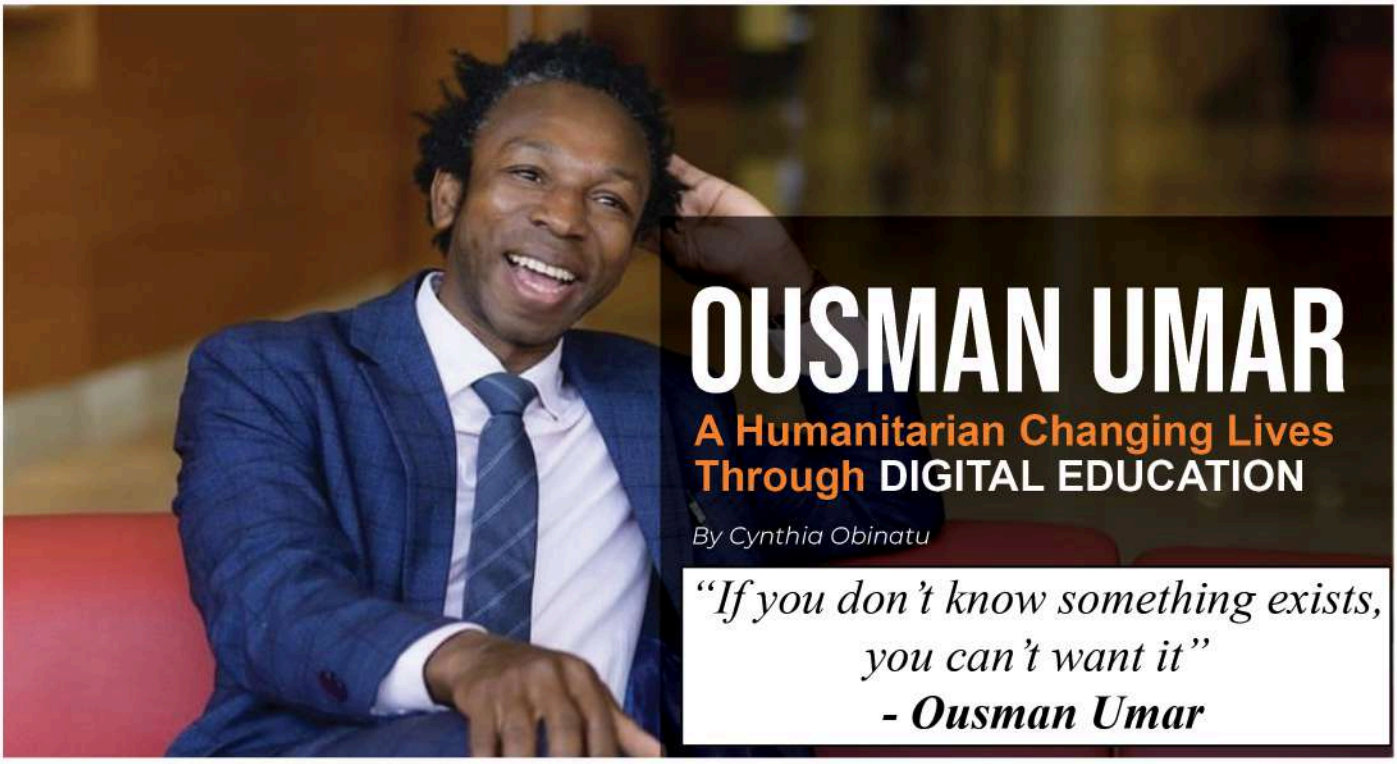


A co-founder of tech unicorns Andela and Flutterwave, Iyinoluwa is a central figure in Africa's startup ecosystem. His mission goes beyond founding billion-dollar companies. He is invested in creating a new generation of African founders. Through Future Africa, he invests in early-stage startups with big visions for impact. Iyinoluwa's success is a powerful reminder that with the right support, Nigerian youth can build global businesses rooted in local problems.

5. Maryam Laushi

Maryam is a communications strategist with a passion for gender rights and youth inclusion. She has served as spokesperson for the Not Too Young To Run movement and continues to use digital storytelling to advocate for women, equality, and good governance. Through every campaign and media engagement, she insists that youth voices belong at the center of Nigeria's decision-making tables.





OUSMAN UMAR

A Humanitarian Changing Lives Through DIGITAL EDUCATION

By Cynthia Obinatu

"If you don't know something exists, you can't want it"
- Ousman Umar

Ousman Umar is a man loved by many; he is a man on a mission to stop others from going through the pain he did. At just 12 years old, he left his village in Ghana, crossed the desert and the sea, and almost died chasing a better life in Europe. After finally making it to Spain, he didn't just rebuild his life, but also made it his goal to help others avoid the same dangerous path.

In 2012, he founded NASCO Feeding Minds, a group that brings digital education to young people in Ghana. Instead of giving food or clothes, Ousman gives something even more powerful - knowledge. He believes in the fact that: if young people can learn digital skills, they'll have more chances to build a good life at home rather than risk their lives migrating.

In his memoir, North to Paradise, Ousman Umar recounts his harrowing journey from a small village in Ghana to the streets of Barcelona. Published in English on March 1, 2022, and translated by Kevin Gerry Dunn, the book offers a candid and provocative account of Umar's experiences as a young migrant seeking a better life- contributing to his ongoing commitment to humanitarian efforts through his NGO, NASCO Feeding Minds.

In the past few years, he's grown the project fast. Over 17 computer labs have now been set up across rural Ghana. More than 65,000 young people have received digital skills training, and many have gone on to become local tech leaders, teachers, and changemakers in their own communities.

Ousman also launched new projects to teach income-generating skills like beekeeping and farming, helping young people create a life where they are. And with the new Sumbo House, a training and storage facility in the north, where he's making sure the work can scale, reach deeper, and last longer. The work is practical, smart, and driven by one clear goal: stop the cycle of poverty and migration by opening doors through education.

Ousman has won awards and spoken at big events, but what stands out most is his focus. And his work is not just about helping people today; it's also about building a future where young Africans don't have to leave home to find hope.







INNOVATION IN TECH AND BUSINESS

How AltSchool Is Training Africa's Next Tech Workforce

By Cynthia Obinatu



Across Africa, the tech industry is growing fast, but the talent pipeline hasn't caught up. AltSchool Africa is changing that, and doing it in a way that feels grounded, accessible, and built for the people who need it most.

Launched in 2021, AltSchool Africa was built to give everyday Africans access to in-demand digital skills without needing a computer science degree or expensive bootcamp fees. It offers hands-on, flexible programs in Software Engineering, Product, Data, and even Creative Economy, all designed with beginners in mind.

What makes AltSchool stand out isn't just the content, but the approach. Students learn online, at their own pace, while getting real-world mentorship from experienced industry professionals. It's practical, community-driven, and deeply focused on helping students get hired, not just certified.



So far, tens of thousands of students across Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, and beyond have passed through the program. And the numbers aren't just impressive — they're telling. Many AltSchool learners have landed remote tech jobs, local internships, freelance gigs, and even launched their startups. For people who were once priced out of opportunity, that kind of access is a game-changer.

The platform also builds community intentionally. Through WhatsApp groups, peer check-ins, and local meetups, learners don't just get trained and stay connected. That sense of belonging is especially powerful in a continent where access to the right network can be just as important as skill.

AltSchool's impact is backed by a clear mission: to close the opportunity gap in Africa by making quality tech education affordable and practical. And while it started as a software-focused platform, the team has since expanded into non-code tracks, showing a real understanding of where the future of work is headed.

This isn't just another edtech startup trying to go global. AltSchool is trying to go deep, reaching people from underrepresented backgrounds, small towns, and countries often left behind in the digital economy.

"In a continent where youth unemployment is high, and traditional education often fails to prepare students for the real world, AltSchool is building a new path — one learner at a time.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

How West Africa's Youth are Pioneering a GREENER FUTURE

By Adebola Titilola



As floods displace and heat waves disrupt agriculture, youths in West Africans are refusing to remain passive victims of a global crisis; instead, they are building local solutions that align with their communities' needs and cultural values.

In Nigeria, startups like Wecyclers are pioneering innovative recycling models in dense urban areas rewarding residents for turning in recyclable waste and partnering with local governments to create a cleaner Lagos. Meanwhile, ColdHubs uses solar-powered cooling units to preserve farm produce, reducing food spoilage and protecting farmers' earnings.

In other west African countries, fashion entrepreneurs are championing sustainable design, reviving traditional textiles and promoting slow fashion. In Ghana, Yvette Tetteh is raising awareness about ocean pollution and sustainable agriculture. From Benin Republic to other west African countries like Sierra Leone, youth-led organizations are planting trees, adopting eco-friendly farming methods, and advocating for clean energy policy.

These changemakers are not just responding to climate change but also reimagining what sustainable living can look like in Africa. They blend indigenous wisdom with cutting-edge innovation, ensuring that solutions are rooted in culture and relevance. The future of sustainability in West Africa is not just in UN reports, it's in the hands of the next generation, already leading the charge.



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT



Recently, West Africa has seen a surge in individuals breaking Guinness World Records in inspiring ways. These feats spread across different fields from chess and cooking to wig making and art showing that not just talent, but perseverance, purpose, and the power of dreams.

Here's a list of 5 outstanding West Africans that have entered the Guinness World Records recently;

Helen Williams, a wigmaker based in Lagos, made history on 7 July 2023, she set the record for the longest handmade wig, stretching 351.28 metres. The creation took 11 days and over two million naira. It involved using an underlay of wig cap netting and black fabric attached to a bicycle helmet, plus 1,000 bundles of hair, 12 cans of hair spray, 35 tubes of hair glue, and 6,250 hair clips. In May 2024, she secured another GWR title: the widest handmade wig, measuring 3.65 metres (11 ft 11 in) wide and trailing to the floor. That second record used over 800 bundles of auburn hair and cost over 4,138,200 Naira in material alone.



Hilda Baci (Hilda Effiong Bassey) is a chef whose cooking marathons have captured international attention. Already known for her long-duration cook-athons where she cooked for 93 hours and 11 minutes straight in May 2023, in September 2025, she broke the record again for largest serving of Nigerian jollof. While this achievement was part of verification processes, Hilda has become a symbol of culinary endurance in Nigeria.



Clara Chizoba Kronborg earned her place in the record books with an ambitious interview marathon. In March 2024, aboard a docked yacht in Marbella, Spain, Clara conducted continuous interviews over 55 hours and 90 guests to create a record setting interview session. The event gathered voices from diverse fields including business leaders, creatives, and change-makers, focusing on success stories and humanizing professions often seen from afar. This was officially recognized by Guinness World Records and underscored the power of voice and connection.



Tunde Onakoya is a chess master and social entrepreneur, best known for founding Chess in Slums Africa, which uses chess as a tool for education in underserved communities. In April 2025, in Times Square, New York City, he completed a 64-hour chess marathon from April 17 to 20. This marathon earned him the official Guinness World Record for the longest chess marathon, surpassing the previous record of 61 hours, 3 minutes, and 34 seconds. Tunde's attempt went beyond just the game itself, it is part of his fundraiser efforts aimed at building free schools for homeless children across Africa.



Kanyeyachukwu Tagbo-Okeke is a 15-year-old Nigerian artist on the autism spectrum who, on World Autism Acceptance Day on the 2nd of April 2025, unveiled a massive artwork titled "Impossibility is a Myth." He painted a canvas measuring 12,303.87 square meters over 132,000 square feet, making it the largest canvas painted by an individual for awareness and inclusion. The vibrant piece featured an infinity symbol and various artistic elements to tell a story about neurodiversity and hope.



DR. STEPHEN AKINTAYO

A SIGNIFICANT STRIDE GLOBALLY AND A POWERHOUSE IN REAL ESTATE, PHILANTHROPIST, INVESTMENT COACH, TRAINING, MENTORSHIP, AND PUBLIC SPEAKING IMPACTING THIS GENERATION

By Ileriayo S Okunrotifa



1. Tell us the story behind this incredible legacy. This astonishing legacy you've created over time. What sparked it all, the key lesson learned, and the mistake made along the way, too. So I think putting all this together would give us a solid question of... the story behind the incredible legacy.

Stephen Akintayo: Well, thank you for having me. It's a humbling story. I was born in the northern part of Nigeria, Nadugurically precise. My mother was a civil servant. My father's business had crumbled before I was born, and, so, we had experienced a lot of poverty at some point where we were living. There was no running water, no electricity. That's got me curious about... poverty, why are we poor? You know,

I remember once asking my mom that question, and her own argument was. Because she didn't go to the university.

And, so she said a lot of her colleagues were promoted ahead of her, and that if only I could go to university. When I graduate, I'll get a good job, and my life is gonna be great.

Unfortunately, by the time I graduated, there was no job, talkless of a good job, entrepreneurship was the pathway, at the age of 17, I read a powerful book that changed my life, called Rich Dad, Poor Dad And that has shown me that, contrary to what my mother was teaching me, education does not guarantee wealth, And so, while in the university, I started business, and when I graduated, I still didn't get the job. I decided to focus on some of the businesses I started when I was on campus, I had to sell electronics, and I sold popcorn. I used to organize trade fairs, sell books, and also Bulk SMS.

I picked it up and grew it to become a leading digital marketing firm. By 2015, PZ, GT Bank were clients of ours. We then expanded into real estate development 10 years ago. I had been doing real estate, but as a broker. We keep expanding into real estate, and today we are on four continents with the help of God.

GTEXT Holding has made a significant stride globally. Can you tell us about some of your most notable projects and strategies that contributed to the success and uniqueness?

Well, this month marks 10 years since we went into real estate development and I remember when we started in 2015, There was a crisis of trust in the market, just like we're having right now. So people were buying land and when they came back home, either a relative had calmed them or the real estate company they did business with, they just suddenly realized they'd packed up, they no longer had an office, a lot of drama back then. How do we change the narrative and create trust?

So we're the first to start doing land allocation and inspection with social media, Facebook Live Streaming. We also realize the majority of those invested were in the diaspora and trust was an issue. We started using technology, and we were also the first to start 24-7 operations, where you could call our office at 2AM, and somebody would attend to you. We're the first to also start sending customer documents to them anywhere in the world, we partner with DHL.

So, we brought a lot of that, and that helped us to scale.
COVID-19 was when we really enjoyed it, because when we were doingit then. People were still insisting, I have to come physically to see the property.
I'm not just trusting the technology part. But when COVID happened, everybody was locked down. Most of our colleagues shut downtheir businesses. We continue to use technology.
In 2020, we started the expansion to Dubai. We're able to sell over $100 million worth of property in Dubai, and we also became a major game changer, people started investing, and we're able to help customers get their rental income from anywhere in the world. Many of our clients, since they bought property in Dubai, have not set foot in Dubai and they're getting rental money from their tenants. So integrity has been a key, too, that has helped me, being visible, and people seeing that the founder of the business is out there, His reputation is bigger than whatever transaction you are doing with him and there are a lot of credible people as well, who are on our board. So, it's not even a one-man business as well, with a strong and solid structure.
For over 7 years, I've not had to personally handle any customers myself. Even if you are my relative, you come to me, I link you up with your staff and they handle it for you. So, having a solid structure at home.

How would you prioritize your time and energy?
From business, philanthropy, to mentorship, public speaking, and family.
Well, I would say, well, I'm lucky to have started early. I'm a young man and I learned early that it's good for a young man to bear his yoke in his youth. There's all this time, if you prioritize it well and if you understand what matters the most, you'll always be able to create time. It's not been easy. I integrate my family into what I do. So, there are certain conferences I have to go to with my family. But it hasn't been that easy, as people see on social media. You know, social media can be deceptive. It's taking a lot of toll on me as well.
The opportunity I have is that I'm younger. If I'm doing this in my 60s, it will have been a lot tougher. So being able to start a business and go through all this early and it's been the help of God. Some things are also divinely gifted, you can't just explain it, you just have the unusual energy for it, and it's quite divine, those are the things I would attribute to.

Your foundation has provided scholarships to various Nigerians, including food items and relief packages. So, how do you measure the impact, and what really inspires this initiative? How do you feel when you see yourself changing people through your foundation?
Charity gives me joy more than anything else. I'm more excited about giving than when I make money because giving is living. Giving is breathing. To measure impact, sometimes it is tough to measure impact. We started a program where we were giving a $5,000 grant to small businesses and we had to spot it, because it was quite difficult. You know, you give somebody $5,000. One year later, some of those businesses have already even packed up and that's quite discouraging, we are extremely discouraged. This is why I then prioritize training. When you are new in business, you would think all your problems are money but money is the last problem you really have in business. Your idea is shallow, but you think it's smart, because first of all you have only just prioritized money and you would soon see how useless that money can be, because everything will just mess you up. You will lose all that money.



What can you say to the young entrepreneurs having challenges with raising capital funds? A lot of businesses keep dangling through the small circle they have, and the hope to expand is not even there. What is the best possible way they can go about overcoming these challenges?
Also, let me say that. The biggest currency is not capital, the biggest currency is sales. Let's look at your industry. The numbers should be there, but every young man is coming to you to say, Give me money. I say, where's the customer? Where are the sales? Where will the money return from? How much will be your monthly income? How much will be your yearly income? I can calculate when I'll get my capital back and my profits but you are not even selling, you are saying, give me money, give me money. Okay, I give you the first one, then what happens to the next?
So, mastering sales, how cash flow works, and how the business works is what young people need. It's not capital. Keep shouting capital, capital. Capital is everywhere, waiting for you.

As an investment coach. What sector do you see as most promising for investment in Nigeria, West Africa, and Africa? What can you really advise people to look out for in terms of throwing their money on, in terms of investment?
Well, I think number one is agri-processing and distribution. A lot of people, of course, when we say agriculture they are too focused on planting. I am into farming, and I think that the market is even heavily saturated.
Do you know how much profit tomatoes would give you? The real issue is the processing and the distribution. That's the real issue, so going into that sector. There's so much money to be made, that is my number one. Number two. It's still going to be real estate. The currency, particularly in Nigeria, is stabilizing now. The economy is beginning to take a positive turn. Naira is getting stronger by the day and you can see that there's no crazy fluctuation like we used to have. So now, you can invest in real estate. We are about to start on another 1,000 housing units because of the stability we are sensing in the market. If you go into land banking, the kind of profit you can make is very good. I've been doing land banking for over 10 years."I have land I bought at 250,000 Naira. Today, the value is over 50 million per plot"
Right, so where else could I have gotten that kind of profit? It's just that it's long-term, and you have to have that long-term mindset.
Thirdly, buy incredible shares. Dangote is about to sell 10%. The capital market has good stocks to buy. Absolutely good stock to buy. I would jump in on that. So there are a lot of great companies too,
Or the value that you can invest in, aside even new shares, or new offers. They're investing companies that are just undervalued because ofthe economic challenges, why we're undervalued. If you buy them now, I foresee that The economy is gonna turn around, and in the next 2-3 years, we're in a whole different conversation.

The cryptocurrency market, and I don't know how they probably put the industry. What can you say about that? Is that also an investment opportunity?
It is, and it's a huge one but don't do it if you don't have training in it, because it's in the high-risk investment category and you've seen how many people have lost money, too. Forex Trading is not a scam. It's real but it's a high risk. So you can make a million dollars today in Forex Trading and lose $2 million tomorrow, right?
Africans don't understand loss. Anytime we lose, it must have been because it's a scam. So I tell people, don't go into any business without its training. Get training, and get a mentor. Bitcoin is doing so well. The future of currency is digital. There's no way about it but don't rush into what you don't know. I don't invest or involve myself in a business I don't know. I have let other people make money from industries that I don't know. Every time people call me, come and do oil and gas, my answer has always been, I don't know how that business works. I wish all of you all the best. I have more oil and gas friends than I have from other sectors but that would not make me go into oil and gas. Right? Because I don't understand it and thank God I didn't, because see how Dangote is kicking everybody out of the market right now.

What part of you do you think people don't know and you would like to share with the world?
I don't really think there's anything people don't know. Maybe the fact that we have diversified now. We have a new company called Tassie Holdings, which is a private equity firm. We are reworking on even my own brand and the company brand, because. The real estate had covered other subsidiaries we are in. Next year,
I think this is the first media to hear it. I'm starting a reality TV show. It's called Real Estate Mogul, and we're also attempting a Guinness World Record for the largest real estate conference in the world and we're also shooting at least two movies next year.

CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

FROM KENTE TO ADIRE:

How Heritage Became High Fashion

By Asifat Oyewole

Before a single word is spoken, West African textiles speak in color, pattern, and heritage. They are more than fabric: memory, meaning, and movement woven into cloth. From the regal threads of Ghana's Kente to the indigo artistry of Nigeria's Adire and the revolutionary pride in Burkina Faso's Faso Dan Fani, these textiles carry centuries of history and identity. Once reserved for kings, ceremonies, and sacred rites, they are now redefining modern fashion across continents, stitched into catwalks, campaigns, and closets worldwide.

In Ghana, Kente cloth has long held royal significance. Worn by Ashanti and Ewe royalty, Kente is handwoven in bold geometric patterns and symbolic colors: gold for wealth, blue for harmony, and black for maturity. Once reserved for sacred occasions, it has become a cultural icon, worn proudly by both West Africans and the diaspora during moments of celebration and pride.

In Nigeria, the Yoruba people have preserved two equally powerful textile traditions: Aso-Oke and Adire. Aso-Oke, a luxurious, handwoven fabric often laced with metallic threads, is a status symbol used in weddings, festivals, and naming ceremonies. Adire, on the other hand, is a resist-dyed cloth crafted traditionally with natural indigo. Created mostly by Yoruba women, its tie-dye and batik patterns reflect both artistry and heritage, and today, a new generation of creatives is reinterpreting it with modern twists.

From Burkina Faso comes Faso Dan Fani the "woven cloth of the homeland." Popularized during the presidency of Thomas Sankara in the 1980s, it became a national symbol of identity and self-reliance. More than just cloth, it embodied pride in local craftsmanship and resistance to Western dominance in African dress culture.

These traditional textiles are no longer confined to local traditions. They have become the canvas for Africa's fashion renaissance. Designers like Nigeria's Lisa Folawiyo elevate Ankara and Aso-Oke with embellishments and impeccable tailoring. Ghana's Christie Brown reinvents Kente in power suits and structured dresses, while Loza Maléombho from Côte d'Ivoire blends heritage silhouettes with Afrofuturist aesthetics. Cameroonian couturier Imane Ayissi even brought Faso Dan Fani to the prestigious Paris Haute Couture Week, putting African fabric on a global luxury platform.

Today, a fresh wave of creativity is transforming how these textiles are seen and worn. What once draped royalty now walks red carpets. Kente is reborn as jackets and jumpsuits. Adire appears in capsule collections and luxury streetwear. Faso Dan Fani, once a political statement, is being reimagined by young Burkinabe designers into minimalistic fashion for the modern world. At Lagos, Accra, and Dakar fashion weeks, these reinterpretations shine brightly under global spotlights.

Women remain at the heart of this evolution. From the dyeing pots of Abeokuta to the handlooms of Ouagadougou, their craftsmanship sustains tradition while nurturing economic empowerment. In many regions, women-led cooperatives keep the heritage alive while training the next generation. Meanwhile, technology is playing an increasing role with designers embracing digital design, e-commerce, and global social platforms to reach new markets and tell new stories.

This is no revival it is a movement. These fabrics are not just surviving; they are thriving, transforming, and telling new stories in every stitch. Rooted in royalty, re sistance, and rhythm, West African textiles have evolved from sacred tradition to contemporary statement. Once revered solely for their past, they now shape the future of global fashion. And in their weave, the world finds not only beauty but a deeper understanding of African identity, pride, and creative power.





INNOVATION IN TECH AND BUSINESS

IFE DUROSINMI

EMPOWERING AFRICAN WOMEN THROUGH FINANCIAL INNOVATION

By Adebola Titilola

When mentioning women on a mission in the financial space, Ife Durosinmi is a name that can't be left out. She is redefining what leadership, impact, and empowerment look like in real time and she's doing it by building Africa's first women focused fintech platform, Herconomy.

Ife studied Biochemistry at Covenant University and then went ahead to get an MBA from Coventry University where she discovered that she was interested in the intersection of business, impact, and innovation. Herconomy is a financial technology platform built to give women more than just access to money. It offers them the opportunity to belong, to grow, and to lead. It started off as a community and has evolved into a powerful tool for financial inclusion, offering savings plans, business grants, learning opportunities, and job placements tailored specifically to women.

What sets Ife apart is her relentless focus on creating tangible change. In an ecosystem where women are often underfunded and underserved, she is turning the tide.

Herconomy has supported thousands of women in scaling their businesses, managing their money, and gaining access to opportunities traditionally kept out of reach. She hosts a conference every year with this year's theme being Wealth building to break systematic barriers. She had notable speakers like Dr Kennedy Okonkwo, Engr Abisoye Coker, Dr Bea and other prominent figures. In March, she also had a challenge for female business owners to help fund their businesses granting the winner N1,500,000 Grant and 3 Months of Free Workspace, 1st Runner Up N1,000,000 and 2nd Runner-Up N500,000

> *"Ife's impact doesn't end at just being founder of Herconomy, She also shows up every day as a mentor, a mother, and an advocate for women's economic independence.*





OSIKOYA DAMILOLA

THE WOMAN REDEFINING STORY TELLING, TRAVEL, AND LIVING LIFE IN FULL GLAM



From luxury travel experiences that celebrate freedom and friendship to cinematic productions that spotlight authentic African narratives, Osikoya Damilola is building a lifestyle and media empire grounded in creativity, intention, and impact.

As the founder of Switch Visuals Productions and a dynamic force in the travel industry, she stands at the intersection of culture, storytelling, and empowermenta modern visionary reshaping how Africa is seen and celebrated.

In this conversation, Damilola opens up about her journey, her philosophy of success, and what it takes to bring powerful ideas to life across industries.o. But I'll be into oil and gas and I still might do it, you never know.

You've built an incredible path across media and lifestyle. When you think about success these days,what does it look like for you personally?

Success, for me, is no longer defined by achievements or recognition, it's about impact and alignment. I measure success by how fully I'm living in purpose, creating work that moves people, and building platforms that open doors for others. If my work inspires creativity, tells meaningful stories, and encourages people to live fully, that's true success.

You're running both a travel company and a production company, two worlds that demand so much. How do you make it all work?

It's definitely a dance, but one I love. Both worlds feed each other creatively: travel inspires storytelling, and media allows me to share those stories beautifully. I've learned to build strong teams, delegate with trust, and stay clear on my priorities: knowing what needs my focus and what can move without me. Most importantly, I protect my energy and make time to pause, even in the middle of motion.

What's one risk you've taken that completely changed things for you? whether it worked out or taught you something big?

Starting Switch Visuals Productions was a massive leap of faith. I had no guarantees, just a conviction that Africa's stories needed to be told differently. That experience taught me you don't need to have everything figured out before you begin, you just need to start. That single decision transformed my life and set the foundation for everything I'm building today.

You're leading a production company that's bringing a fresh voice to creative storytelling in Nigeria. How did that journey first start for you?

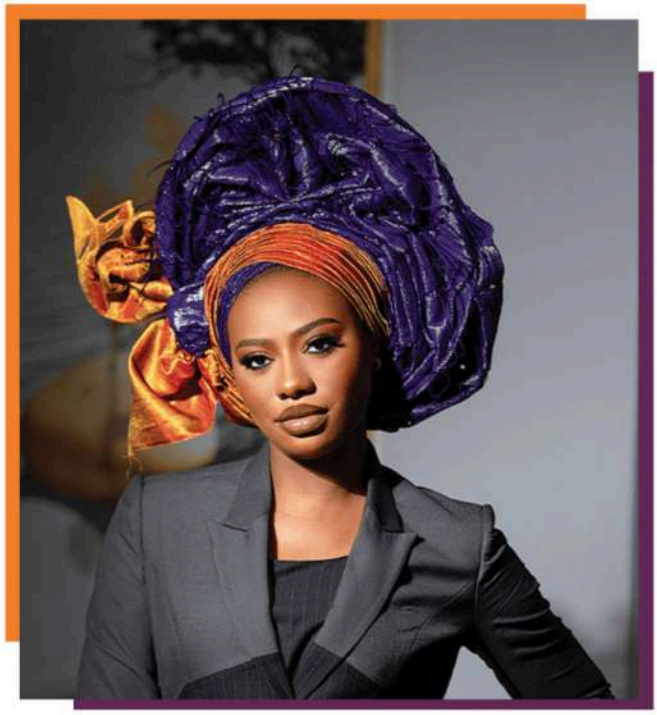
It started with curiosity and passion. I've always been fascinated by visuals, culture, and human stories. Working in media opened my eyes to how storytelling shapes perception and identity. Switch Visuals was born from a desire to tell African stories that feel global yet deeply personal, stories that show who we are beyond the headlines.

People often see the finished project, but not what happens behind the scenes. What's the toughest part of bringing a production to life here in Nigeria?

The process itself from logistics and funding to infrastructure can be challenging. But the toughest part is balancing creative vision with practical realities. You're constantly managing dreams against budgets, schedules, and unpredictable variables. Yet, when it all comes together and you see the final product on screen, it's worth every hurdle.

In an industry that's always shifting, how do you stay true to your creative voice and keep things original?

I stay grounded in my "why",I draw inspiration from everywhere, but I always filter it through authenticity. I remind myself that no one can tell a story exactly the way I can. So I focus on truth, whether emotional, cultural, or personal. That's where originality lives.



Can you share a project that really pushed you out of your comfort zone but made you proudest in the end?

Every major production has stretched me, but the ones that fuse art, music, and culture challenge me most. One recent project came with tight deadlines, complex coordination, and emotional storytelling. But seeing how deeply it resonated with audiences reminded me why I do this. Growth rarely happens in comfort.

Every creative faces challenges with funding or resources at some point. How do you push through those moments and still deliver great work?

By choosing resourcefulness over resources. I've learned to use creativity as my currency, finding new ways to tell powerful stories even when budgets are tight. Collaboration also fuels me; I love working with people who share my vision. The truth is, passion attracts provision. Once people see your commitment, opportunities follow.

Looking ahead, what kind of stories do you want Switch Visuals Productions to be known for, and what kind of legacy are you hoping to build?

I want Switch Visuals to be known for stories that connect deeply stories that move hearts,shift perspectives, and celebrate African excellence. The legacy I'm building is one of courage and possibility, proving that you can be creative, global, and deeply rooted in who you are all at once.

We hear that Switch Visuals Productions is teaming up with Judith Audu Productions on a new musical drama that sounds exciting! What inspired that collaboration, and what can we expect from it?

Yes, it's a project I'm truly excited about. The collaboration came from a shared vision with Judith Audu Productions to merge storytelling, music, and emotion in a fresh way for Nollywood.It's a musical drama that celebrates resilience, artistry, and the beauty of African voices: bold, soulful, and unlike anything audiences have seen before.

SPECIAL FEATURE

THRIVETHIRST_BYRAE

Efficiency Excellence Creativity

A brand committed to elevating every event into a memorable experience. At our core, we believe that drinks go far beyond beverages. They set the tone, create the atmosphere, and leave lasting impressions on every guest. At Thrivethirst_byrae, we offer a comprehensive range of services designed to meet the needs of modern celebrations.







1. **Signature Cocktails and mocktails :** crafted with precision, flair and premium ingredients

2. **Welcome Drinks** that instantly captivate your guests and set the right mood

3. **Drinks Procurement :** allowing clients to rest easy while we handle all sourcing and supply

4. **After-Party Paparazzi :** unique service capturing candid, joyful moments long after the spotlight fades

5. **Professional Mobile Bar Services**

THRIVE THIRST BY RAE

For us, it is not just about serving drinks, it is about creating an experience for the guests. Thrive thirst By Rae stands ready to bring elegance, energy, and unforgettable flavours to any occasion.

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YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

LEAP AFRICA:

Shaping the Next Generation of Leaders in Nigeria, One Leader at a Time

By Adebola Titilola

In a country full with potential but affected by structural gaps, one organization has consistently risen to the challenge of equipping young people with tools not just to survive but to lead. LEAP Africa (Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability and Professionalism) is a trailblazing nonprofit that has empowered thousands of youth across Nigeria through its programs in education, technology, and leadership development. LEAP Africa is known for its visionary commitment to youth empowerment. In a society where many young people face uncertain futures, LEAP is building bridges to opportunity and nurturing a generation that dares to lead.

Founded in 2002 by renowned social entrepreneur Ndidi Nwuneli, LEAP Africa emerged from a clear need to address one of Nigeria's most pressing challenges. For over two decades, the organization has stayed true to its founding vision which is to equip young Africans with the values, skills, and tools necessary to take ownership of their future and that of their communities. One of LEAP Africa's core strengths lies in its holistic approach to youth development. Rather than offer quick fixes, the organization designs programs that integrate personal ethics, entrepreneurial thinking, digital skills, and civic responsibility. Their Youth Leadership Programme (YLP) trains secondary school students across Nigeria to become agents of change in their schools and communities. The program teaches them to understand leadership not as a position, but as a lifestyle rooted in service and accountability.

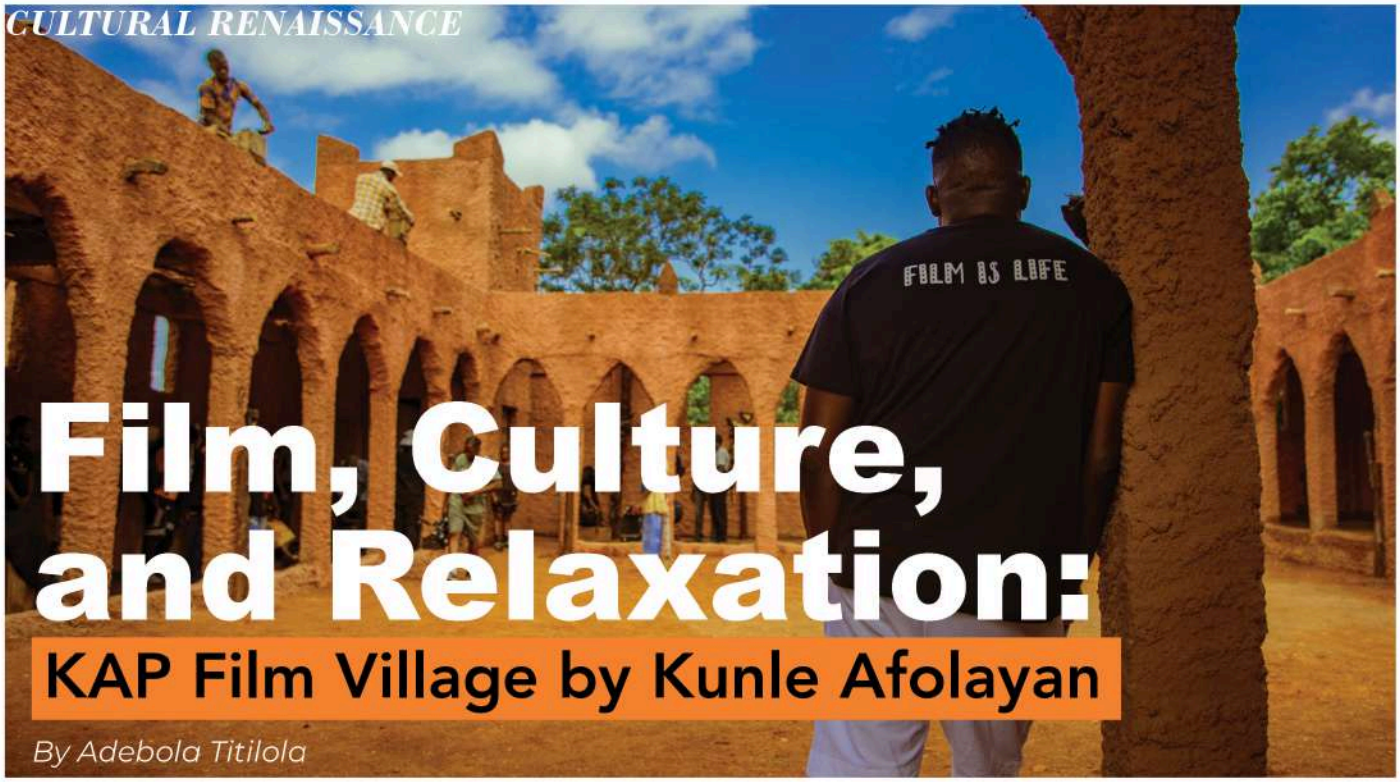
Through its Social Innovators Programme (SIP), LEAP provides mentorship, funding access, and technical support to young Nigerians leading innovative social enterprises. Graduates of the SIP have gone on to launch impactful ventures in health, agriculture, education, and climate advocacy. Proving that with the right support, Nigeria's youth cannot only dream big but deliver real impact. Alumni from LEAP's programs are now reshaping their communities and redefining what's possible across the continent.

In a time when digital fluency is as important as academic literacy, LEAP is equipping its beneficiaries to become global citizens and contributors in the tech-driven future.Its Annual Youth Day of Service initiative brings together thousands of young Africans every August to execute community-driven projects in health, education, environment, and beyond—showing that youth can be both the energy and the conscience of society.

What sets LEAP Africa apart isn't just its programs, but its belief in the power of young people to change their story and the world at large. At a time when many youths face the threats of unemployment and insecurity, LEAP stands as a powerhouse of transformation. LEAP Africa is pushing the agenda of one empowered youth at a time.



CULTURAL RENAISSANCE



Film, Culture, and Relaxation:

KAP Film Village by Kunle Afolayan

By Adebola Titilola

Built in the heart of Igbojaye, Oyo State, KAP Film Village & Resort is the brainchild of award-winning Nigerian filmmaker Kunle Afolayan. More than just a hospitality project, it is a cultural haven designed to blend film, tourism, and creativity into one unique destination. The village is envisioned as a hub where storytelling meets relaxation.

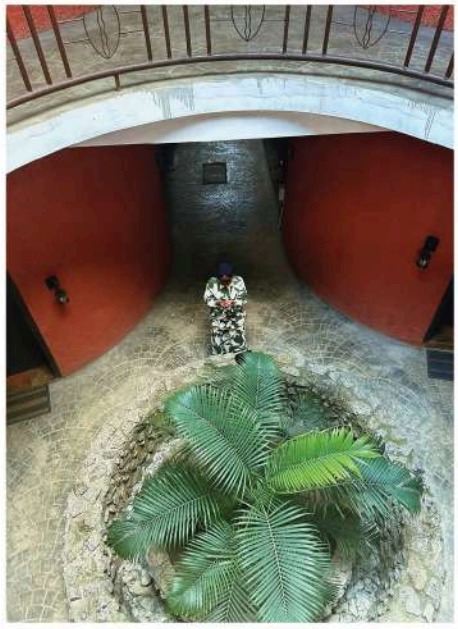
For decades, Kunle Afolayan has stood at the forefront of Nollywood, pushing the boundaries of African storytelling through his films like The Figurine, October 1, Citation, and Anikulapo. His films are usually deeply rooted in heritage and still globally relatable. Beyond cinema screens, he has harbored a bigger vision, creating a hub where storytelling, cultural preservation, and hospitality converge which happens to be KAP Film Village and Resort.

The resort is a world-class film production village and a hospitality destination. On one hand, it provides facilities for filmmakers and On the other hand, it offers serene lodges, recreational areas, and curated cultural experiences that immerse visitors in Nigeria's heritage. This combination makes it unlike anything else in West Africa. A place where art, culture and leisure truly coexist. What makes KAP Film Village particularly remarkable is its cultural grounding. From its architecture, inspired by Yoruba traditional designs, to the culinary experiences that highlight local Nigerian cuisine, everything about the resort celebrates identity. Guests are not only welcomed into a luxury space but also taken on a journey into the richness of Nigerian culture.

But beyond artistry and leisure, the village carries immense economic and social significance. The resort has created jobs for local artisans, builders, and creatives, while also positioning Oyo State as a new hub for cultural tourism. In doing so, it challenges the concentration of Nigeria's film industry in urban centers and demonstrates how film can be a tool for regional development.

The resort is also designed to be a training ground for emerging filmmakers by giving the next generation access to a space equipped for high-quality production, KAP Film Village positions itself as a legacy project that ensures the sustainability of Nollywood and empowers youth through creativity.

With the rise of streaming platforms like Netflix, Prime, Amazon and Showmax investing heavily in African content, KAP Film Village serves as a vital resource for productions looking to authentically capture Nigerian stories so the resort also as a global impact. KAP Film Village & Resort is a cultural revolution in bricks and mortar. It is a space where creativity meets comfort, where storytelling merges with tourism, and where Nigeria's heritage is preserved even as it is projected onto the world stage.




Ilu Aje
Ilu Ede
Tree House
Oyo Palace








KAP FILM VILLAGE & RESORT




KAP VILLAGE



INTO THE HEART OF WEST AFRICA

Unforgettable Places to Explore

By Asifat Oyewole

West Africa, a region rich in culture, history, and natural wonders, stands as one of the most captivating destinations for tourists seeking authenticity, adventure, and immersive experiences. From golden beaches and ancient cities to breathtaking waterfalls and cultural festivals, West Africa is a traveler's dream waiting to be explored. Here are five top tourist places to visit in West Africa, each offering unique features that make them must-see destinations.



01

Cape Coast Castle

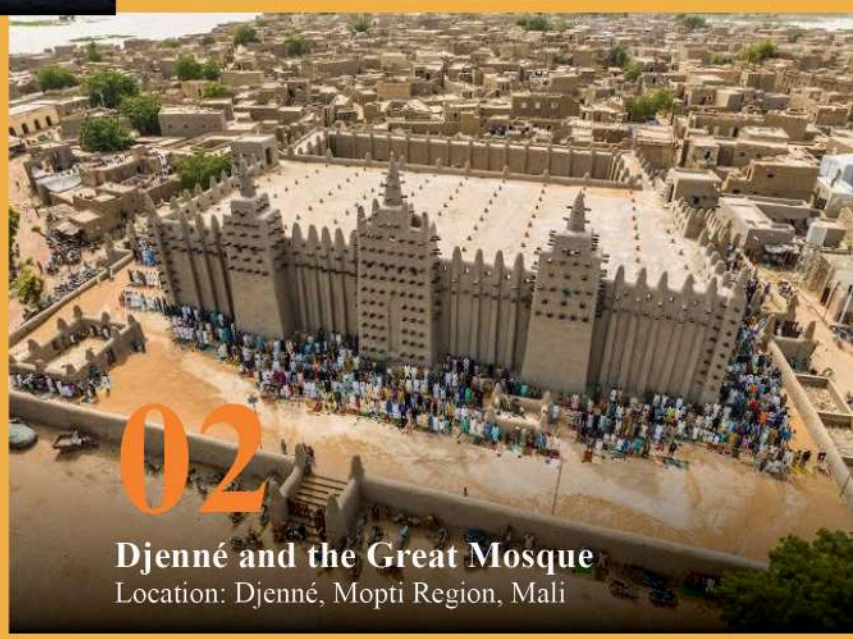
Location: Cape Coast, Central Region, Ghana

UNESCO World Heritage Site: Cape Coast Castle is one of the oldest European-built structures in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Slave Trade History: This fortress served as a major holding site for slaves during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Guided tours provide emotional and educational insights into Africa's colonial past.

The "Door of No Return: A symbolic and emotional experience that allows visitors to connect with African diasporic history.

Museum and Artifacts: Exhibitions and displays tell the story of African enslavement, colonialism, and resistance.



02

Djenné and the Great Mosque

Location: Djenné, Mopti Region, Mali

World's Largest Mud Brick Building: The Great Mosque of Djenné is a spectacular example of Sudano-Sahelian architecture, made entirely of sun-baked earth bricks.

UNESCO World Heritage Site: Recognized for its architectural beauty and historical importance.

Annual Plastering Festival: Local residents gather every year to re-plaster the mosque, preserving its structure and tradition.

Ancient Trading City: Djenné was once a major center of Islamic learning and trade in West Africa.

Traditional Markets: The surrounding area features vibrant markets where you can experience Malian culture firsthand.

CULTURAL RENAISSANCE



03 Yankari National Park

Location: Bauchi State, Northeastern Nigeria

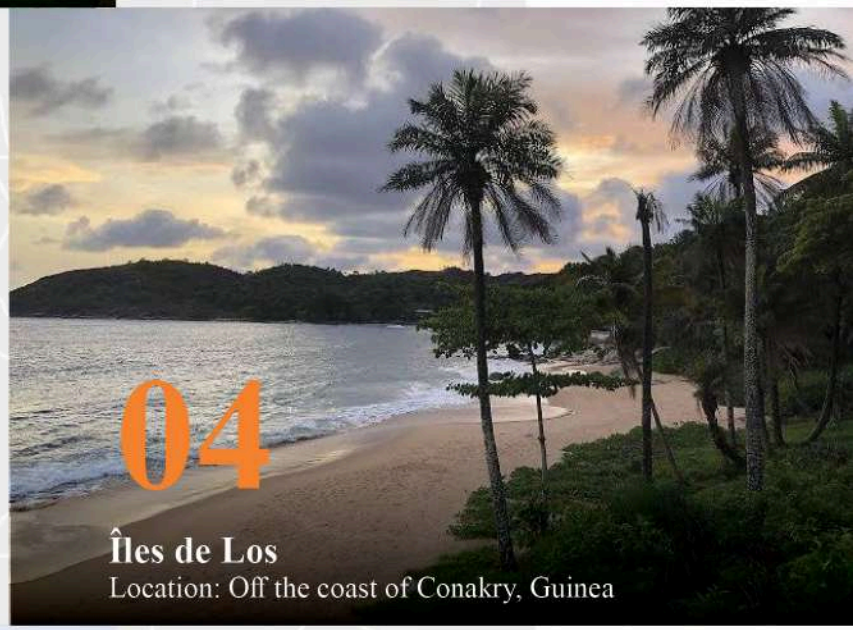
Largest National Park in Nigeria: Home to one of the richest wildlife populations in West Africa.

Wildlife Safaris: Elephants, baboons, roan antelope, hippos, and over 350 species of birds can be seen.

Wikki Warm Spring: A crystal-clear warm spring perfect for swimming and relaxing.

Eco-Tourism Lodges: Accommodation and guided tours are available for visitors looking to explore the park.

Conservation Efforts: The park plays a key role in wildlife protection and biodiversity conservation in Nigeria.



04 Îles de Los

Location: Off the coast of Conakry, Guinea

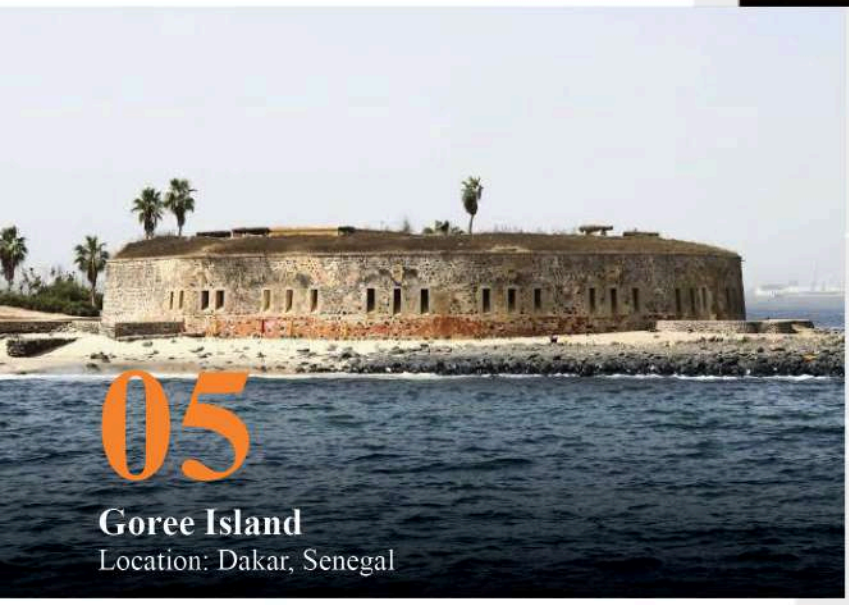
Pristine Beaches: White sands and turquoise waters offer a tranquil escape from urban life.

Island Hopping: Comprises several islands, including Tamara, Room, and Kassa, each with unique vibes and landscapes.

Snorkeling & Water Sports: Clear waters make it ideal for diving, snorkeling, and kayaking.

Traditional Culture: Explore local fishing villages, music, and cuisine.

Accessible by Boat: Just a short boat ride from Conakry, making it a convenient day-trip or weekend getaway.



05 Goree Island

Location: Dakar, Senegal

House of Slaves Museum (Maison des Esclaves): A deeply moving museum dedicated to the victims of the Atlantic slave trade.

Colonial Architecture: Colorful, French-style buildings line the island's peaceful streets.

UNESCO World Heritage Site: Recognized for its significance in the history of the African diaspora.

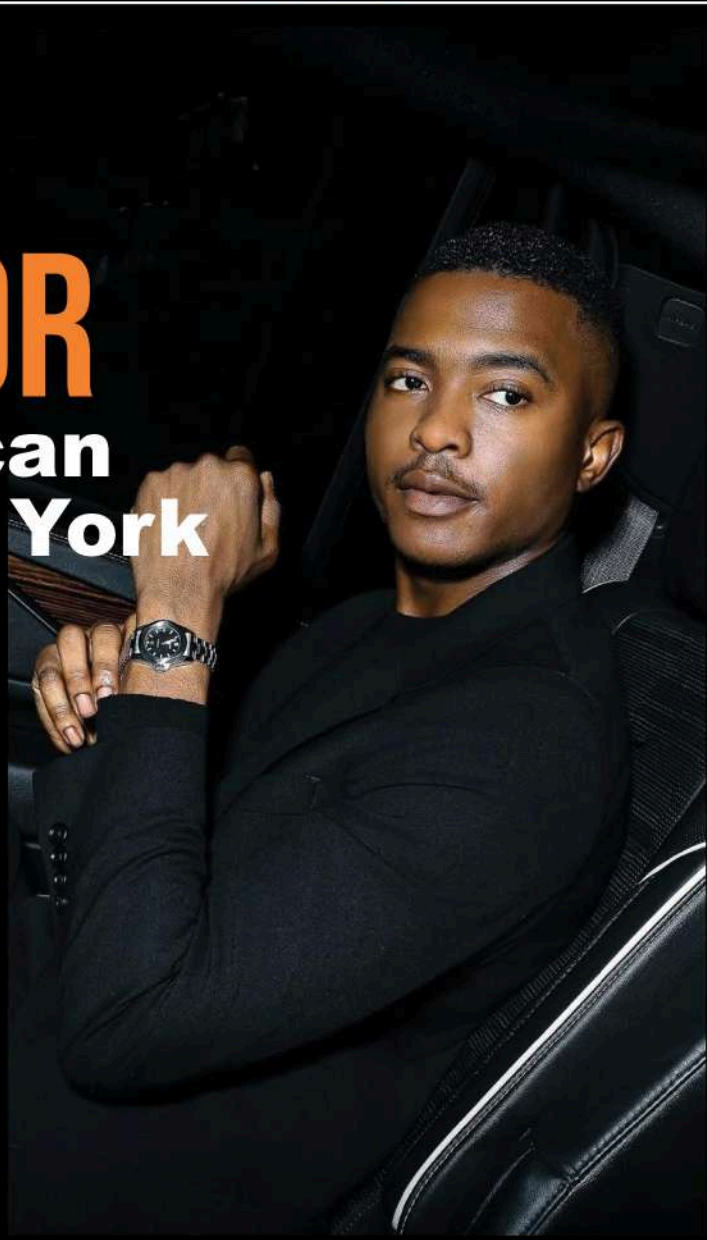
Art Galleries & Craft Shops: Local artisans sell handmade items, reflecting the island's vibrant cultural life.

Panoramic Views: Stunning ocean views and photo-friendly scenes make it a popular spot for artists and tourists alike.

IGEE OKAFOR

Redefining African Style from New York

By Cynthia Obinatu



Igee Okafor is more than just a fashion influencer — he's a leader in how African culture and style are shaping the global fashion conversation. Born in Nigeria and now based in New York, Igee blends his roots with modern menswear to create a style that's bold, elegant, and unapologetically African.

What sets Igee apart is how he uses fashion as a form of leadership. For him, dressing well is not just about looking good; it's about making a statement. His style challenges outdated ideas of what African fashion should look like and pushes for more representation in spaces that often ignore African creativity.

Igee's influence extends beyond his Instagram and YouTube. He's become a voice for African men who want to express themselves confidently and authentically. Through interviews, talks, and collaborations with brands, he educates and inspires people to embrace culture, sophistication, and self-expression.



In a world where fashion often follows trends, Igee leads by blending timeless looks with cultural pride. His leadership lies in his ability to connect tradition with modernity, helping redefine how African identity is seen globally.

His journey from Nigeria to New York wasn't easy, but it's a perfect example of how leadership is about persistence. Igee built his brand from scratch, proving that with vision and hard work, African voices can take center stage on the world's biggest platforms.

As a leader in fashion, Igee Okafor shows that true style is also about confidence, identity, and inspiring others to lead in their way.

NEXT-GEN SUSTAINABILITY

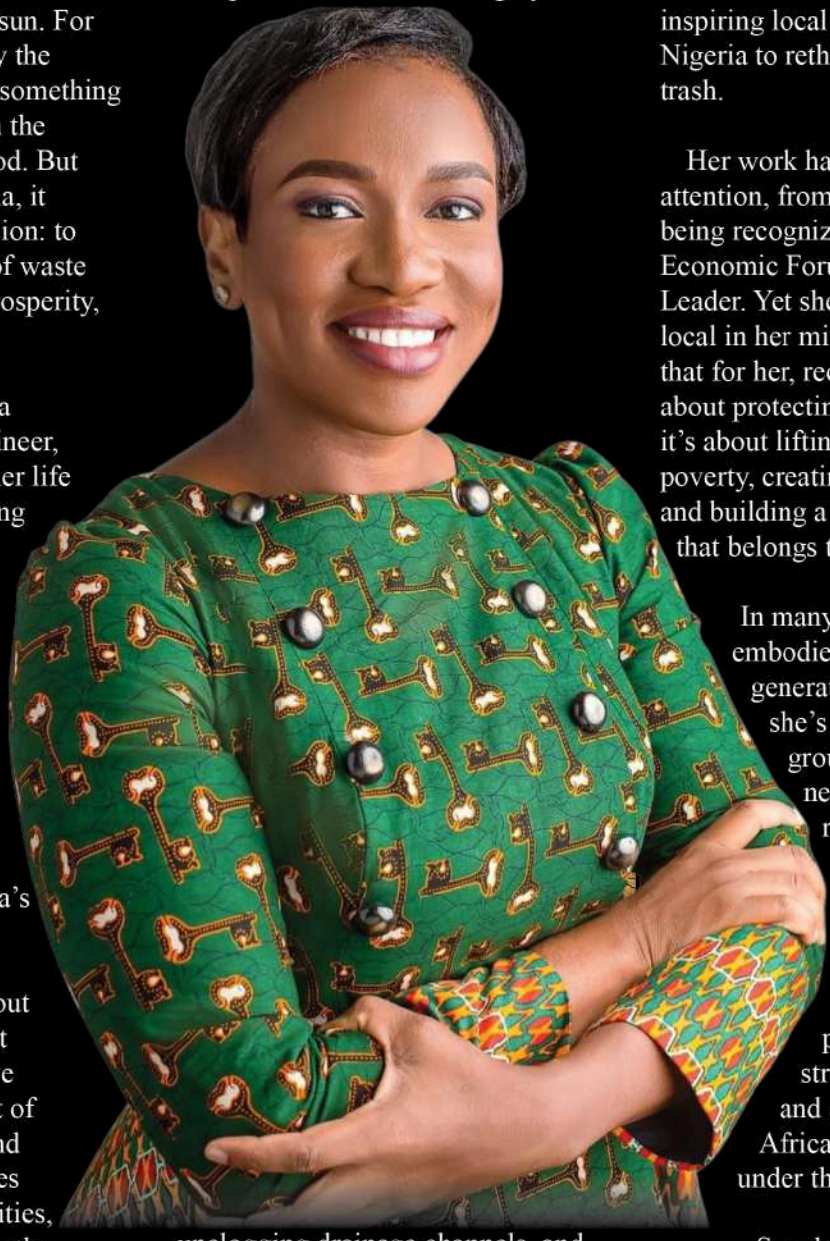
BILIKISS ADEBIYI-ABIOLA:

Nigeria's Queen of Trash Turning Waste Into Wealth

By Benita Obajuobalo

In Lagos, a city that produces over 13,000 tonnes of waste every day, plastic bags swirl through gutters, water sachets clog drainage, and vast piles of refuse bake under the hot sun. For most people, this is simply the backdrop of urban life — something to step over or curse when the rains come and streets flood. But for Bilikiss Adebiyi-Abiola, it was the beginning of a vision: to transform the mountains of waste into stepping stones for prosperity, health, and dignity.

A graduate of MIT and a former IBM software engineer, Bilikiss could have built her life anywhere. But it was during graduate school that she began deeply researching waste management, realizing just how vast and underutilized Africa's recycling potential truly was. Returning home to Nigeria, she founded WeCyclers, a company that has since become a household name in Nigeria's sustainability movement.



WeCyclers isn't just about collecting waste; it's about flipping the entire narrative around trash. Using a fleet of low-cost cargo bicycles and tricycles, the company goes into low-income communities, collecting recyclables directly from households. In return, families earn points that they can exchange for essentials — food items, phone credits, household goods. The system not only cleans neighborhoods but also injects value back into some of Lagos's most economically strained areas.

Under Bilikiss's leadership, WeCyclers has created thousands of informal jobs, from collectors and sorters to small-scale recycling processors. They've diverted over 10 million kilograms of waste from dumpsites, reduced flooding by unclogging drainage channels, and given countless families a practical incentive to keep their environments clean. For many young Nigerians, especially women, sorting and supplying recyclables has become a lifeline that puts food on their tables and children in school.

But Bilikiss didn't stop at running a company. She became a loud, persuasive voice for policy change. As the former general manager of the Lagos State Parks and Gardens Agency (LASPARK), she pushed for greener urban spaces and better waste management policies, inspiring local governments across Nigeria to rethink how they handle trash.

Her work has attracted global attention, from CNN features to being recognized by the World Economic Forum as a Young Global Leader. Yet she remains steadfastly local in her mission. She often says that for her, recycling is not only about protecting the environment; it's about lifting people out of poverty, creating a dignity of labor, and building a circular economy that belongs to Nigerians first.

In many ways, Bilikiss embodies the best of next-generation sustainability: she's tech-savvy yet grounded in community needs, globally respected yet fiercely committed to local solutions. She shows that turning waste into wealth is a viable pathway to cleaner streets, fuller pockets, and a future where African cities don't drown under their own refuse.

So when you see a WeCyclers team pedaling through crowded Lagos streets, collecting bags of plastic bottles with bright smiles and eager hands, remember that this is more than just waste collection. It's one woman's dream turning discarded scraps into hope, opportunity, and a cleaner, richer Nigeria for all.



THROUGH THE LENS

An Exclusive Conversation with **Snappcode**

At The Pinnacle Magazine, our team had the privilege of sitting down for an exclusive in-person conversation with Snappcode, the visionary photographer. Representing the magazine, Adebola Titilola engaged him in a discussion about his journey, creative process and what he is working on

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If you could go back and give your younger self one piece of creative advice, what would that be?

I don't think I've done anything I think I regret or anything I need to go back and change. Everything and every process I've gone through has shaped me to be the man that I am today and I don't think I'd want to do it any other way.

You've worked with major brands like Binance, GTB, Guinness, Tecno, and Nigerian Idol. How do you tailor your visual storytelling to match each brand you work with?

First thing with me is I ask questions. Never assume with brands, clients or anything just like I do in relationships. Ask questions in every step you take, don't assume. That's how you'll be able to plan ahead for any brand

What's one lesson or creative principle you find yourself repeating most often to your staff at Snappcode?

One thing I tell them always is to be persistent. Be persistent, always listen and observe everything because that's what helps you grow. You grow by listening and observing not doing. Observe first and do later.



What role do you think Snappcode is playing in shaping how African stories are told?

Number one we changed the game of lifestyle business in general and now we've a lot of lifestyle photographers. When I started it was just fashion and others. We gave birth to lifestyle photography in Nigeria and we've always been focused on branding which has helped a lot of influencers build their brand.. A lot of my work has been published in Nigeria and outside Nigeria in different magazines like New York Times and even Forbes. We've been able to help our clients climb the global stage and that's the most important thing to me, to see people grow.

What drives your creative spirit on difficult days or when managing multiple projects?

That's why I have a team! I have a team that is better than me and I am not ashamed to say it because that's where I thrive in so where I lack, I need people who are efficient and better in it. I have people that are better than me in my office so we always sit down to talk and rob ideas to deliver excellence.

If you weren't building your legacy through photography and production, what other path might you have taken?

I think I'd be into oil and gas. Not the typical 9-5 tho. But I'll be into oil and gas and I still might do it, you never know.

Snappcode Productions focuses on lifestyle documentaries, commercials, fashion, and more. What project has challenged you the most creatively, and what did you learn from it?

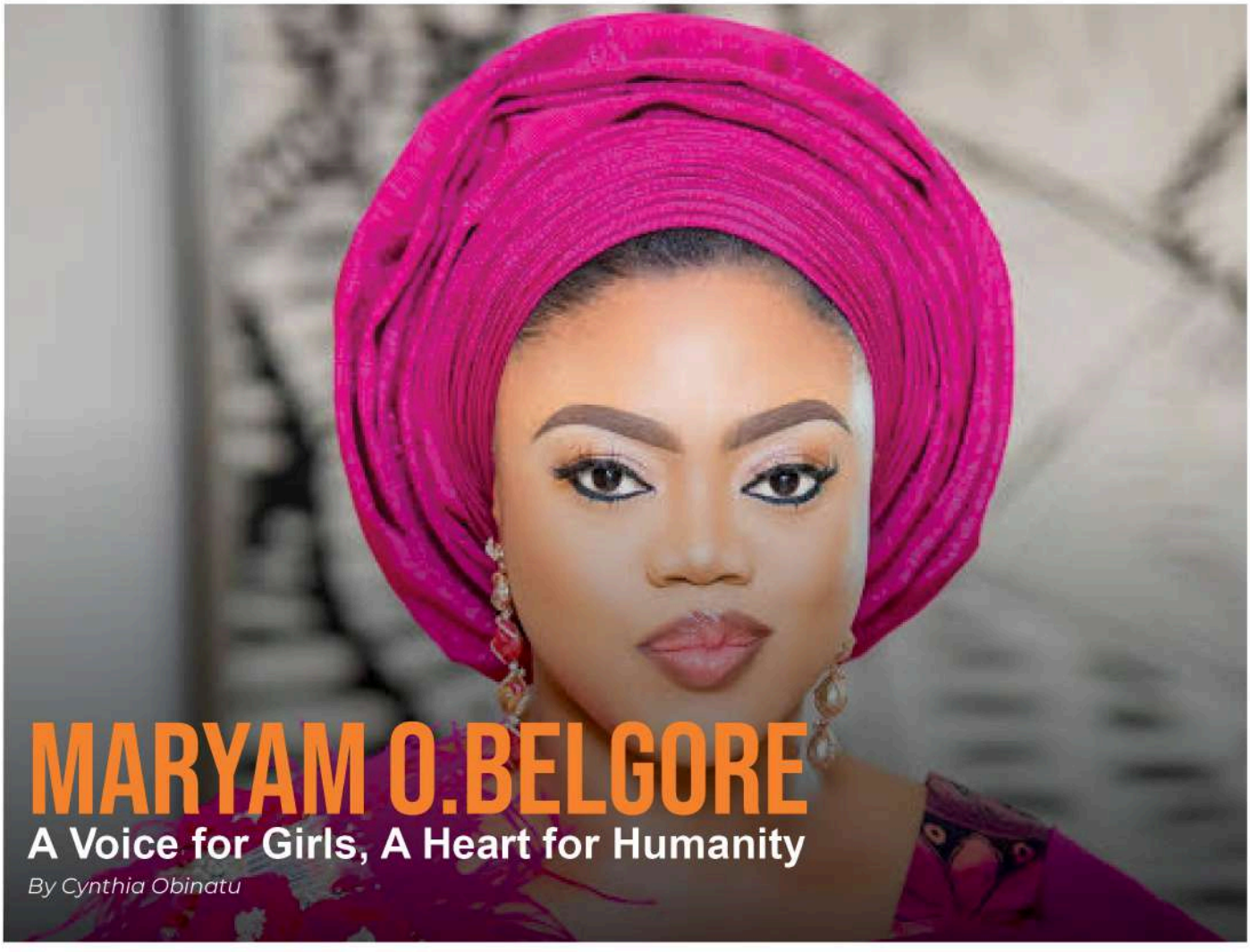
Hmm... plenty. A lot of projects have challenged me and challenged my team but the documentary we did for wounded soldiers in Nigeria and when we also brought Prince Harry and Mergan Markle to Nigeria, it was crazy. Back to back sleepless nights, meetings upon meetings, strategy with every armed forces in the country. Yea, that was challenging.

You already have a lot going. Looking forward, what exciting milestones should we expect next from Snappcode Productions?

Greatness! You should expect a lot. We have our foundation going on that we launched last year wherewe've been helping a lot of kids in school, we've been doing a lot of things and not just production so in our production company, 30% of our money goes back to the our charity organization.

What would you say to young creatives who look up to Snappcode and want to follow in your footsteps?

Thank you for looking up to me but I'd say look up to God because he is the yardstick with which every success should be measured. Try to be a newer version of yourself everyday. Don't try and be like Snapcode, Snapcode is snapcode.



MARYAM O.BELGORE

A Voice for Girls, A Heart for Humanity

By Cynthia Obinatu

Maryam O. Belgore has dedicated her life to one simple belief: that everyone, especially girls and young people, deserves a fair chance. As the founder of the Maryam Onikijipa Belgore Foundation, she has created a strong support system for children who often go unnoticed. From providing school supplies and scholarships to offering basic needs like sanitary pads and food, her foundation has touched countless lives across Nigeria. Her mission? To make sure no child is left behind because of where they come from or what they lack.

Born into a family deeply rooted in faith and leadership, Maryam was raised by Sheik Sulaiman Farooq Onikijipa, a respected Islamic scholar. Guided by her upbringing and values, she has grown into a powerful humanitarian force. Her efforts are not just about charity, they're also about justice and dignity. She's a strong advocate against child abuse, gender-based violence, and harmful practices like female genital mutilation. During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, she provided aid by donating food items worth millions of Naira in Lagos, Kwara, and Abuja.

> *Maryam reminds us that kindness can be a form of strength. Her compassion and empathy inspire others to embrace the power of resilient leadership.*

Her commitment to humanitarian work is guided by her religious beliefs and the teachings of her father, emphasizing that "in all we do, humanity comes first." She continues to make significant contributions to society through her philanthropic efforts.



INNOVATION IN TECH AND BUSINESS

How shuttlers Is Taking the Chaos Out of Commuting in Lagos and Building a Business Around Daily Struggles

By Cynthia Obinatu

If you live or work in Lagos, you already know: commuting is war. Between fuel costs, endless traffic, and the daily stress of public transport, getting to work can feel like a full-time job on its own.

That's exactly what Shuttlers is solving, and they're doing it with tech, structure, and a deep understanding of what working Nigerians actually need.

Founded in 2016 by Damilola Olokesusi, Shuttlers is a mobility-tech startup offering shared rides to professionals through a network of scheduled, comfortable bus routes. The idea is simple: instead of everyone fighting for space in Danfo or paying high fees for ride-hailing, why not ride to work in air-conditioned buses, with your seat guaranteed, and the routes mapped out?



But beyond comfort, Shuttlers is helping companies improve employee productivity and reduce lateness by removing the daily transport headache. From banks to startups, organisations across Lagos and Abuja now use Shuttlers to get their staff to work reliably and on time.

Their mobile app allows users to book rides in advance, track shuttles in real time, and choose preferred pickup points — a level of planning that's rare in Nigerian transport systems.



More than just solving for convenience, Shuttlers is showing what happens when local problems meet smart local solutions. The company has moved over 3 million passengers to date and is steadily expanding its reach beyond Lagos, targeting other congested urban centres.

The model also has a sustainability angle. Shared transport reduces the number of individual cars on the road, helping to ease traffic and lower emissions, two major issues in big African cities.

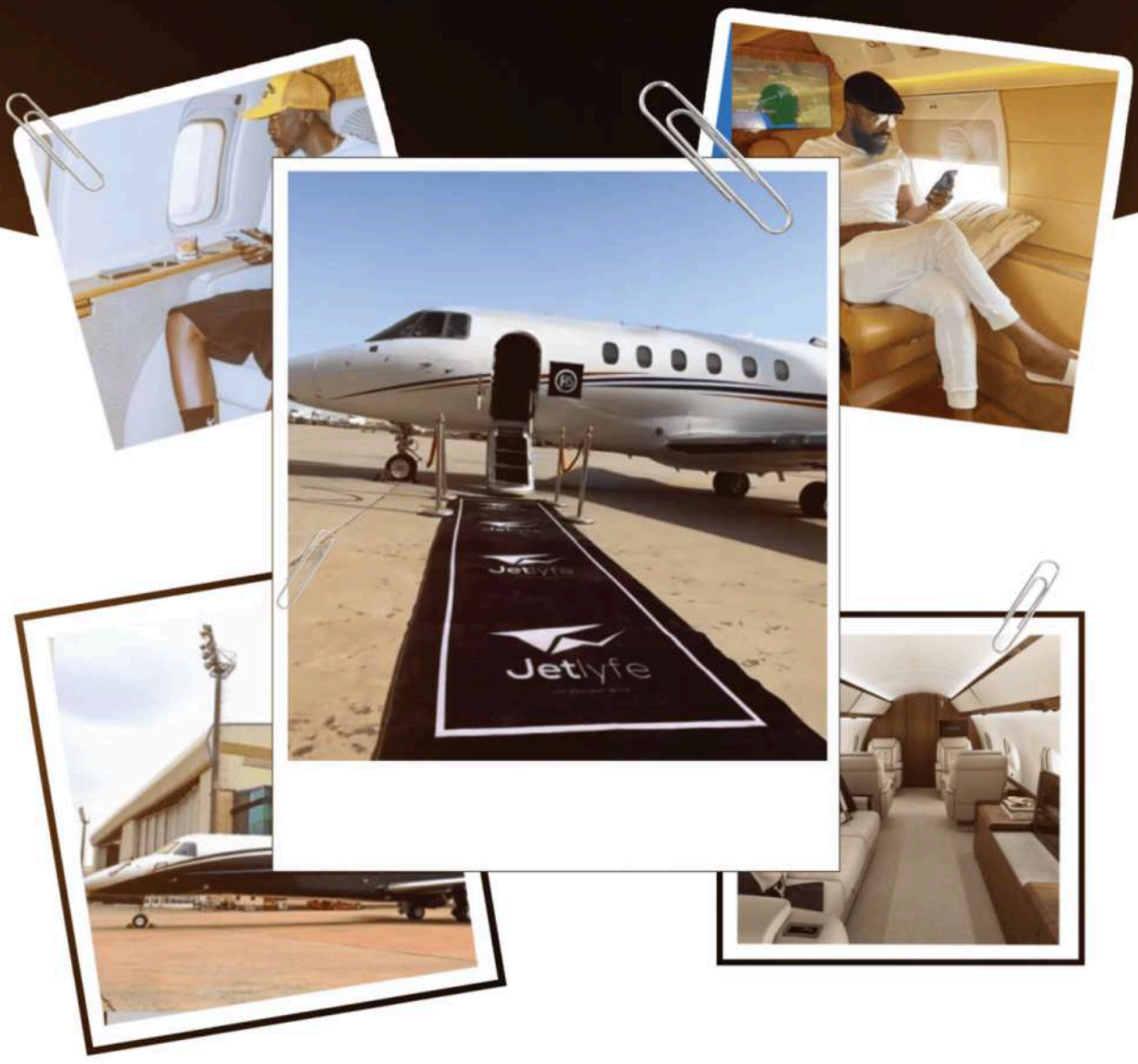
Shuttlers is part of a bigger story around African startups solving African problems. But unlike flashy ideas that don't hold up long-term, this one is rooted in daily realities. People need to move every day, and Shuttlers is making that movement easier, safer, and more affordable.

"With recent backing from investors and plans to scale operations across Africa, Shuttlers is not just another tech company. It's a working system that proves impact-driven innovation doesn't always have to reinvent the wheel — sometimes it just needs to make the journey better.

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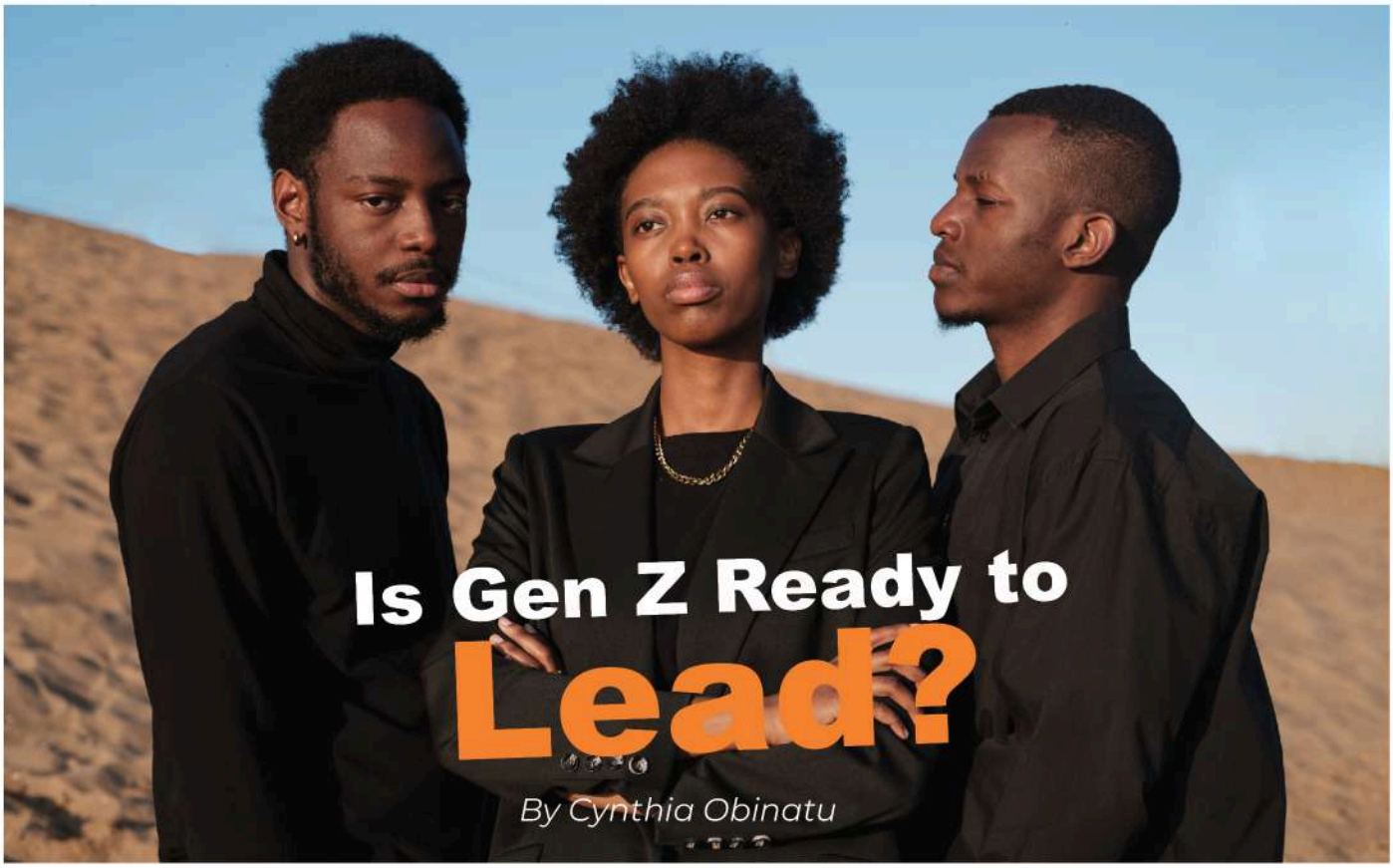
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YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

This is a question that stirs up a lot of talk: Can this generation actually lead? Not just on social media or in peer groups, but in real roles that affect policy, business, and real-world outcomes.



Is Gen Z Ready to Lead?

By Cynthia Obinatu

Let's start with what we know. Gen Z is bold. They speak up, they challenge old ways, and they're quick to walk away from what doesn't align with their values. That alone makes them different from generations before them. While older leaders may have been taught to endure, to "pay their dues," Gen Z asks why, and they ask early.

But boldness is not the same as leadership - maybe it's slightly.

Leadership, at its core, is about carrying people. It's not just about being loud or visible. It's about consistency. Decision-making. Taking the hit when things go wrong. And if we're being honest, this is where Gen Z is still learning. Many grew up in environments where instant feedback – likes, shares, cancellations, etc, shapes how they respond to the world.

But real leadership takes time. It doesn't always reward you quickly. And sometimes, it requires silence, patience, and deep work behind the scenes.

That said, we can't ignore what Gen Z has done already. Around the world, young people are organizing protests, building companies, leading movements, and questioning systems that haven't worked in decades. They're pushing conversations on climate, gender, mental health, and accountability. Even if they're not sitting in boardrooms yet, they're shaping the culture that boardrooms now have to pay attention to.

Still, leadership isn't just about what you oppose – it's about what you build.

The challenge ahead for Gen Z is to move from reaction to strategy. To stop performing leadership and start practicing it. That means doing the boring things: learning policy, studying systems, understanding history, and building stamina. It means listening more, reading the room, and learning how to move people without shouting.

So, is Gen Z ready?

In some ways, yes. They're unafraid. They're imaginative. They have high standards for fairness and accountability. But leadership isn't just a vibe. It's a skillset, and that skillset takes time, mentorship, and a lot of emotional discipline to develop.

The potential is there. The tools are within reach. What's left is the part no one likes to talk about: the quiet, unglamorous work of growth.



(WOMEN OF IMPACT)

KEMI ADETIBA:

The Storyteller Redefining African Cinema

By Benita Obajuobalo

When you think of Nigerian cinema, there are certain names that come with weight. Names that don't just pass through the industry but redefine it. Kemi Adetiba is one of those names. Not by accident or hype. But by sheer, deliberate work. She is a producer, a director, a writer, a creative force who builds worlds and tells stories that sit with you long after the credits roll.

Before the box office records and the Netflix deals, Kemi was a lady with a microphone, hosting radio shows on Rhythm 93.7 FM, giving Lagos her voice. Then came television: Studio 53, Temptation Nigeria, Maltina Dance All, where she stood in front of the camera, but even then, she knew that her place was not to be the face of someone else's vision. She wanted more. She wanted to create, to shape, to own the stories from behind the scenes.

So, she went to New York Film Academy. Because when you want to own your craft, you don't guess. You learn. You sharpen your tools. And when she came back, she was ready. Her first works were music videos. But these weren't just music videos; they were stories. Olamide's "Anifowose", TY Bello's "Ekundayo", Waje's "Onye" and you could feel Kemi in every shot. She wasn't just giving performance scenes and flashy edits. She was giving life, struggle, identity. She was telling stories within stories and every frame of hers was intentional. But the Nigerian film industry didn't know what was coming.

In 2016, The Wedding Party landed. Kemi's debut feature film. A film that took what could have been a simple romantic comedy and turned it into a cultural phenomenon. It was polished, funny, emotional, and relatable. Nigerians saw themselves in it: the chaos of weddings, the family drama, the beauty, the madness. The film grossed ₦453 million, becoming the highest-grossing Nigerian movie at the time. Kemi didn't just make a successful film; she shifted what was possible at the box office.

In 2018, Kemi delivered King of Boys. A political crime thriller that didn't just break Nollywood molds, it smashed them. A film where the lead was a powerful, flawed woman. A film that wasn't afraid to tackle power, corruption, loyalty, and betrayal. Sola Sobowale's portrayal of Eniola Salami was iconic, but it was Kemi's vision that built that entire universe. The film grossed over 245 million, but the real success was in how it became a cultural movement. People didn't just watch KOB, they lived it. They quoted it. They formed the KOB Army. Kemi had done what very few had managed—she had created a Nigerian cinematic universe that people wanted to stay in.

In 2021, King of Boys: The Return of the King was released as a limited series. Seven episodes of pure Kemi Adetiba storytelling. She wasn't following anyone's formula. She was setting the standard. She was proving that African stories, when told authentically and boldly, could stand on any global platform.

And she didn't stop there.

In 2025, she returned with To Kill a Monkey. A crime-thriller series that dives into cybercrime, desperation, and the thin lines people cross to survive. It's not a glossy, feel-good story. It's raw. It's honest. It's Kemi doing what she does best—pulling back the curtain and showing us the parts of society we like to ignore. With a cast that includes William Benson, Bucci Franklin, and Stella Damasus, the series became a global conversation on Netflix. Not because of PR gimmicks. But because Kemi knows how to tell stories that matter.

> " Beyond the camera, Kemi is a mentor, a platform builder, a woman who understands the responsibility that comes with visibility".

Her web series King Women is a testament to that—a space where she sits with African women who have carved their paths and lets them share their journeys. It's not about glamour; it's about truth, grit, and inspiration.

She is also the founder of Kemi Adetiba Visuals, a production house that isn't just about churning out content but about nurturing talent, pushing creative boundaries, and setting a new bar for quality in Nigerian storytelling.

Kemi's work is not accidental. Every frame, every scene, every storyline comes from a place of intent. She tells stories the way they need to be told, in an unfiltered, unapologetic, bold way. She doesn't try to fit into a system, she is building her own system.

Her numbers are loud: over 453 million with The Wedding Party, over 245 million with King of Boys, global streaming hits, sold-out premieres. But beyond the numbers, it's her impact that is louder. Kemi Adetiba has redefined what it means to be a filmmaker in Nigeria. She has shown that women can lead, not just in front of the camera, but behind it. She has taught a generation that owning your story is power.

Kemi is not only a director or a producer. She's a cultural force. A storyteller who doesn't just create films but shapes conversations. Every time she steps on a set, she's not just making a movie, she's making a statement. And we are all paying attention.



ASISAT OSHOALA

Kicking Down Barriers for Africa's Girls

By Benita Obajuobalo

Asisat's legacy will not only be measured in trophies and goals but in doors opened, minds changed, and generations of girls who will grow up knowing there is absolutely nothing wrong — and everything right — with being a girl who wants to conquer the world with a ball at her feet. In that way, every match she plays is more than a game; it's a spark lighting fires that will burn long after her final whistle.

WOMEN OF IMPACT

When Asisat Oshoala runs onto the pitch, it is not just football boots striking grass. It is the sound of barriers falling, of old ideas about what African women can or cannot do crumbling under the weight of her sheer brilliance. With every sprint, goal, and trophy, she is writing a new script, not only for herself but for millions of girls watching from crowded living rooms, dusty school fields, and makeshift viewing centres across West Africa.

Born in the bustling streets of Ikorodu, Lagos, Asisat's story is one of audacity. In a society where girls are often nudged toward quieter dreams, she dared to dream in stadiums. As a child, she would slip out to play football against her parents' wishes, returning home with scraped knees and a grin that said she had tasted freedom. Her talent was too obvious to be hidden for long. Local competitions led to bigger tournaments until the bright lights of international football found her. Today, she is not only one of Africa's most decorated players but also one of its most defiant voices.

From winning the African Women's Footballer of the Year a record-breaking five times to hoisting league titles with Barcelona Femeni, Asisat has become a global superstar. Yet it is the way she uses that spotlight that makes her truly extraordinary. In interviews, she talks openly about the struggles that come with being a woman in African football — the inadequate funding, the lack of facilities, the endless battle for respect in a sport still widely seen as a man's game.

She has been unafraid to challenge her own federation when necessary. During Nigeria's campaigns at major tournaments, she and her teammates have at times had to protest unpaid allowances and poor treatment. Her courage to speak up, even when it risked backlash, has inspired many younger players to believe they too can demand better. She understands that silence would only keep things the same, that progress is often noisy and uncomfortable.

Beyond the fight for fair treatment on the pitch, Asisat is deeply committed to lifting girls off it. Through the Asisat Oshoala Foundation, she organizes football clinics and tournaments for young girls in Nigeria, creating safe spaces where they can dream without limits. Many of these girls come from communities where early marriage and limited education remain threats to their futures. By putting a football at their feet and telling them their ambitions are valid, Asisat is changing more than individual lives; she's gently shifting cultural expectations.

There is something profoundly moving about watching her play. Her style combines power and elegance in a way that almost seems to dance. She celebrates her goals with arms wide open, face tilted to the sky, as if embracing a destiny she once had to fight doubly hard for simply because she was born female. Each celebration is a small rebellion, a statement that women's triumphs in sport deserve the same roar of applause.

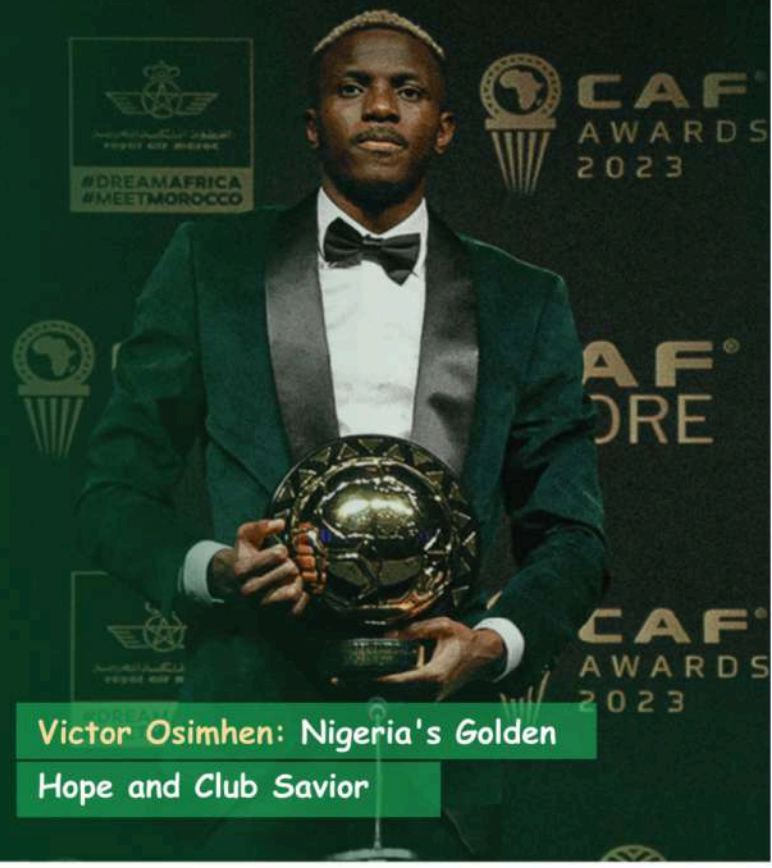
In West Africa, where countless talented girls still battle stereotypes and lack of support, Asisat Oshoala stands as a living, running, goal-scoring testament to what happens when talent meets relentless courage. She carries not just the hopes of Nigeria but the quiet prayers of every girl who ever tied makeshift balls from plastic bags and kicked them between rocks, daring to imagine she could one day play for something bigger.



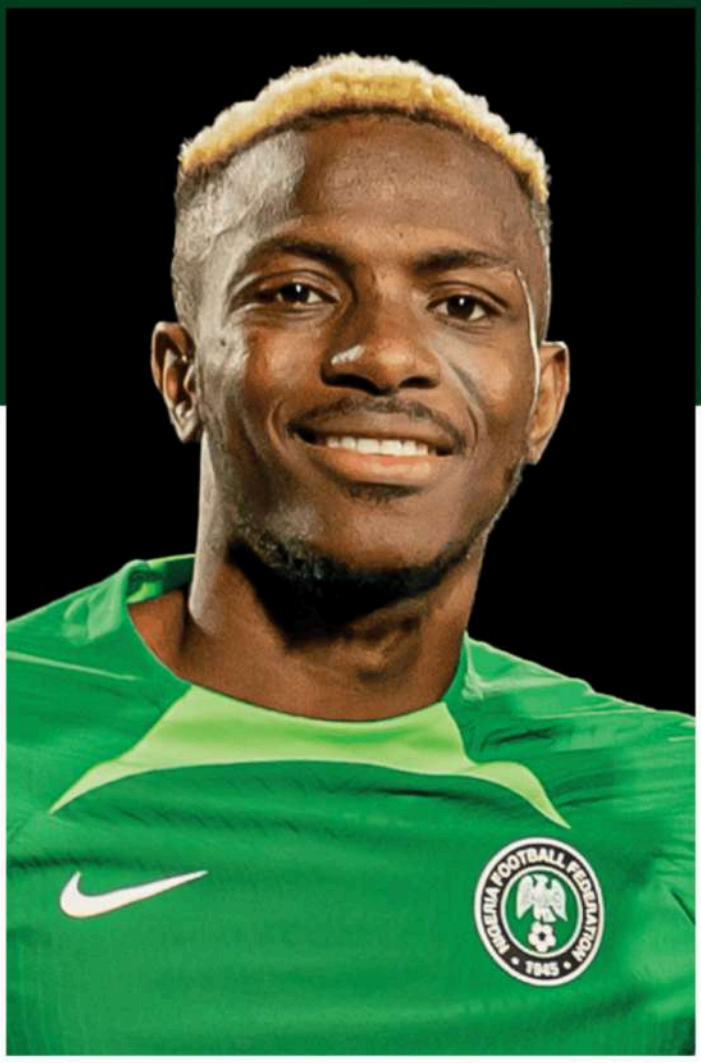
VICTOR OSIMHEN

THE FOOTBALL SENSATION

By Ileriayo S Okunrotifa



Victor Osimhen: Nigeria's Golden Hope and Club Savior



In world football, few stories shine brighter than that of Victor Osimhen, the Nigerian striker who makes soccer easy and interesting to watch, turning heads and breaking records. The young talent from Edo State born December 29, 1998, in Lagos, Nigeria, making him a 26-year-old has become the beacon of hope for his country, Nigeria, and a vital cog in any club team he finds himself in. He is currently on a loan from Napoli to Galatasaray in the Turkish Super League

With his lightning-fast speed, clinical finishing, and infectious energy, Osimhen has captured the hearts of fans and pundits alike. His rise to stardom has been nothing short of meteoric, and he's quickly becoming one of the most exciting prospects in several beautiful games.

As Nigeria looks to make a mark on the international stage, Osimhen is the man carrying the hopes of a nation on his shoulders. His impressive performances have earned him a reputation as one of Africa's finest, and his determination to succeed is an inspiration to aspiring footballers back home.

But it's not just his country that's reaping the benefits - Osimhen's club team is also basking in the glory of his success. His goals and assists have been instrumental in their recent surge, and his influence on the pitch is undeniable.

"He tried various means to make ends meet: selling gala (a type of snack) in traffic, selling pure water, working as a bus conductor, and acting as an agent for Baba Jebu, where he'd help people place bets. Victor Osimhen also sold newspapers alongside his big brother: now he creates headlines as a consistent scorer and a savior for Nigeria, Galatasaray, and any team he finds himself.."

Victor Osimhen has bagged some major awards! He won the CAF Player of the Year award, This award is a testament to his incredible performance, scoring 26 goals in Serie A, leading Napoli to their first league title in 33 years Some of his notable awards include: Under 23 Africa cup winner, under 17 World Cup winner, AIC Footballer of the Year, Super Lig Player of the Season, he won this award after a sensational campaign with Galatasaray, scoring 26 goals and leading the team to their third consecutive league title. Super Lig Golden Boot, Turkish Cup Winner, including an 8th-place finish in the 2023 Men's Ballon d'Or rankings. Currently on a loan from Napoli to Galatasaray in the Turkish Super League

Super Eagles and Galatasaray forward, Victor Osimhen, has been named Sportsman of the Year at the 2025 GQ Türkiye Men of the Year Awards

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

HOW ASHERKINE IS REDEFINING PHILANTHROPY FOR YOUNG NIGERIANS

By Cynthia Obinatu

Akinyemi Oluwaseun Omotayo, popularly known as Asherkine, has built a reputation across Nigeria for one thing: helping people when they need it most. He has turned simple acts of kindness into a full-blown movement of youth empowerment.

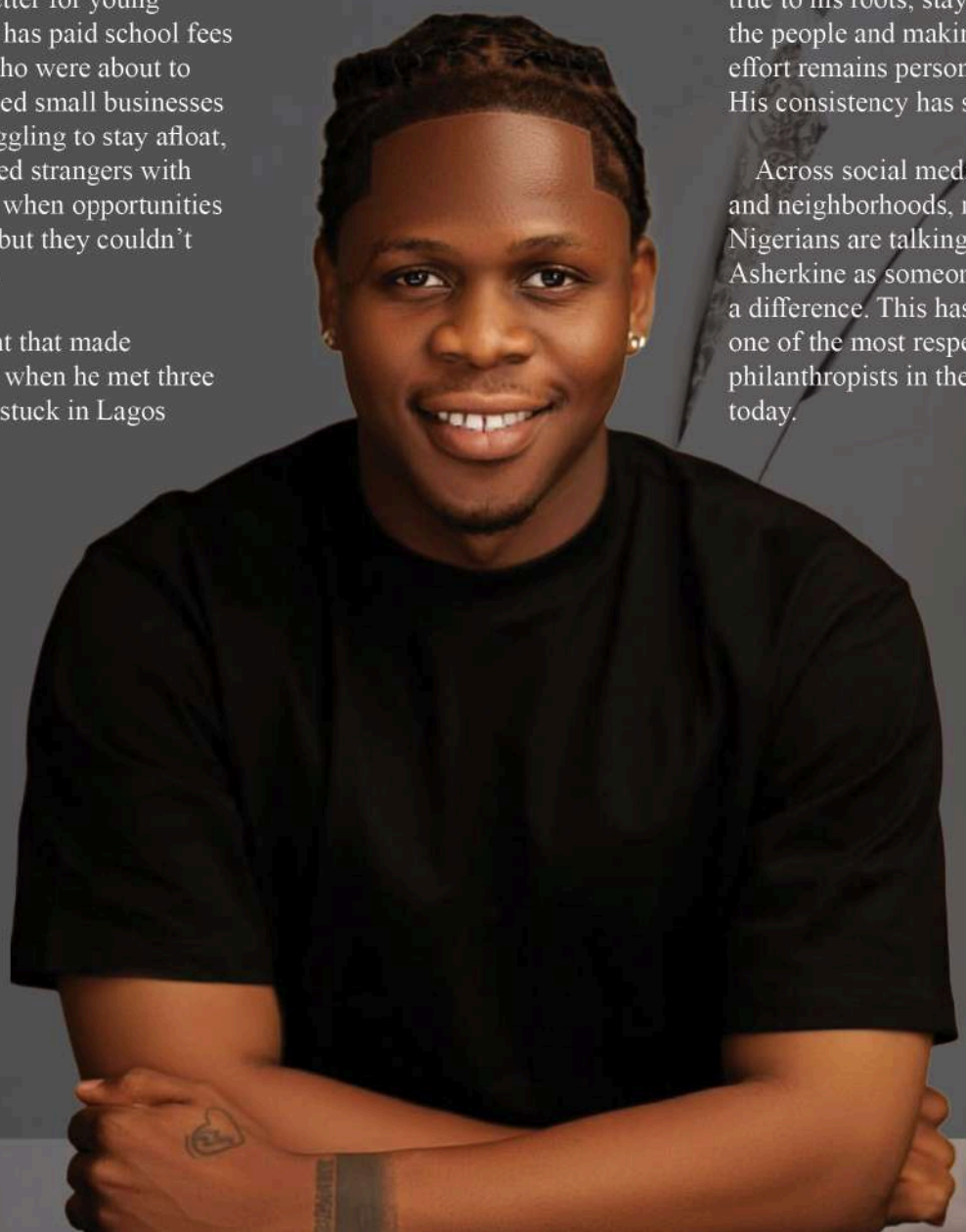
Ranging from the western part of Nigeria to the north, Asherkine has been directly involved in making life better for young Nigerians. He has paid school fees for students who were about to drop out, funded small businesses that were struggling to stay afloat, and even helped strangers with travel support when opportunities came calling, but they couldn't afford the trip.

One moment that made headlines was when he met three young people stuck in Lagos because they couldn't afford flights to Abuja. Instead of offering little handouts, Asherkine bought their plane tickets, gave them shopping money, and made sure they traveled comfortably. This simple act won the hearts of many Nigerians when the video went viral.

Beyond individual support, Asherkine has taken on bigger community projects. In Plateau State, he supported efforts to bring clean water to areas where access was a daily struggle. He also launched scholarship initiatives, helping young Nigerians stay in school and build their futures.

Brands like Indomie, Amstel Malta, Itel, and Lush Hair have since partnered with him, recognizing the real impact his work is making across communities. Yet even with bigger backing, Asherkine has stayed true to his roots, staying close to the people and making sure every effort remains personal and direct. His consistency has set him apart.

Across social media, markets, and neighborhoods, more Nigerians are talking about Asherkine as someone who makes a difference. This has made him one of the most respected young philanthropists in the country today.



THE BUSINESS OF VIBES THE MANY FACES OF ROOBOY

By **Adebola Titilola**



When the lights come on, Rooboy doesn't just perform, he commands. A hypeman, host, actor, and influencer rolled into one, he's the embodiment of the modern Nigerian media personality. In a conversation with Adebola Titilola for the Pinnacle Magazine, he opens up about mastering multiple crafts, staying true to his loud persona, and building a legacy in an industry that never stops moving.

You're not just an hypeman, you're a host, actor, influencer and all round media personality with a full-fledged brand personality, What's been the biggest challenge and reward handling all these roles?

The biggest challenge has been balance. Wearing so many hats from being a hypeman, host, actor and other things I do means constantly switching character while staying true to who I am because each role demands something different like energy, creativity, consistency and emotional strength. There are days when it is exhausting but the drive to grow keeps me grounded and i feel the biggest reward is impact. Seeing people connect with what I do whether it's through performance, skit, reality tv show or a post I make on social media reminds me I can entertain, inspire and motive others while building something big.

As a hypeman, your energy is unmatched. How do you maintain that level of performance and authenticity both on and off stage?

My energy comes from passion and hyping isn't just about making noise but connecting with people and lifting the vibe of the room and for me when I am on stage, I feed off the crowds energy like it's whatever I get from the crowd is how I perform but I also make sure I am giving them something real offstage.I spend time with good people, taking care of my mental space and reminding myself why I do what I do. At the end of the day it's about balance and you can't pour from an empty cup so I take time to recharge, reflect and stay true to myself so that's why I am able to show up all the time with authenticity and fire.

The entertainment industry can be unpredictable. What personal values or routines keep you grounded in the spotlight?

Honestly, the industry is unpredictable. One minute you're trending, doing your thing, everyone is screaming your name and the next day it's quiet. What keeps me grounded are my values, consistency and gratitude. Most of the time I remind myself that the same energy that got me through the room will keep me in the room. I have to stay true to myself basically. I also stay disciplined with my routine which is pray, plan and stay close to people who keep it real with me. I make time to check in with myself not just as an entertainer but as a person because at the end of the day, the frame and light fade off but your character and mindset are what last and that keeps me focused in this journey.

How important do you think hypemen are to the Nigerian entertainment ecosystem today, especially with how live shows and nightlife have evolved?

Hypemen are very important to the Nigerian entertainment ecosystem right now like anywhere you go in the world, you need hypemen in your event take it or leave it. Infact I'll say we're one of the driving forces behind the life experience culture. The energy, the vibe, the connection we create between the artist, the Dj and the crowd that is what turns an event to a moment. As nightlife and shows have evolved, people don't just come out to listen anymore, they come out to feel something and that is where the hypemen comes in. We set the tone, build the atmosphere and keep the crowd alive from start to finish. It's a skill that takes timing, charisma, confidence and emotional intelligence. Today, hypemen have become full blown brands entertainers in our own right and that's a beautiful evolution. We are no longer side voices but part of the habit of the culture. Period!

What advice would you give upcoming hypemen and influencers trying to build a name in such a saturated space?

My biggest advice is find your voice and own it. Another thing is don't try to copy what everyone else is doing because the crowd already has them and what is missing is you! Also, put in the work. Being a hypeman or influncer isn't just about vibes so learn the craft, build your brand and stay professional. The entertainment space is fast moving but the people who last are those who keep evolving while staying grounded. Lastly, stay humble, stay hungry, stay authentic, believe in your journey and never forget why you started the right people and opportunities will align when your energy is real.

Looking back, what would you say was your most memorable or defining moment in the Bbnaija house?

My most memorable day in the big brother naija house has to be the time I won the Head Of House which is HOH in the fifth week. That time I saw myself as king of the jungle. I said it and meant it before I entered the house that even if I don't win anything, I want to be part of the housemate to sit on that throne that makes you head of house.



The show can be mentally and emotionally intense. How did you handle the pressure and maintain your authenticity on camera?

To be honest, the show was mentally and emotionally demanding especially because camera was always on you and there's that pressure to perform and fit into certain expectations but I made a conscious decision to stay true to myself. I handled every pressure by believing in myself, praying, reflecting and reminding myself that I am not there to prove anything to anyone. I also laid on a strong support system referring to my family, friends, fans and amazing people around me who reminded me of who I am beyond lights and camera so even in the toughest moments, I stayed grounded and trust me that's what kept me sane.

Were there any misconceptions about you after the show that you'd like to clear up?

mmm... when I came out of the house, one thing I heard people say was that I am fake and that got to me because what's everyone's definition of being fake? But at the end of the day I guess it's how they saw me on the show and it's a reality show so it's okay for people to believe whatever. I have real personality outside the show and want people to know Rooboy is an intentional man, Rooboy is sweet, caring and a good guy. I stay true to myself and I am original.

What are you currently working on that you want people to look out for?

I am l working on a lot of things and one on the list is the Rooboy Experience which is my annual concert and I can't wait for everyone to witness Rooboy and feel the hype. I am working on my first ever brand called UTKG lipgloss which means "UNLESS THEY KILL GOD". I am also working on Rooboy Foundation which I've been running for some years back now as my own way of giving back to the community. I want everyone to watch out for all, Rooboy Dey for everybody. Thank you.

MAIN

CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

December in Lagos:

THE BUSINESS AND CULTURE OF DETTY DECEMBER, FROM CONCERTS TO CARNIVALS

By Adebola Titilola

From concerts to vibrant carnivals, December in Lagos is always on point and so it earned the global name "Detty December". Every December, Lagos transforms into the heartbeat of Africa's most vibrant celebrations for locals and tourists. It is more than just an endless end of year party season from November but a deeply rooted cultural experience that blends music, fashion, art, business, and community into a colorful, unforgettable spectacle.



The term Detty December may sound casual, but the movement behind it is anything but casual. Lagos becomes a magnet for global Afrobeats fans, entrepreneurs, creatives, and returnees from the diaspora who come back to have fun and attend events back-to-back. Events ranging from high-profile music concerts, exclusive pop-up parties, art exhibitions, fashion shows, street carnivals, and food festivals. It's a time when the city refuses to sleep, buzzing with energy 24/7 and everyone is complaining about stand still traffic because the whole city is outside.

Economically, Detty December is a goldmine. Event organizers, hotels, lounges, restaurants, and vendors experience a massive boom, as visitors and residents pour millions of naira into the entertainment, fashion and hospitality sectors. From securing tickets to sold-out shows like Flytime Music Festival and Vibes on the Beach, to booking top-tier Airbnbs months in advance, to ordering the most popular outfits, the ripple effect across industries is undeniable. The season creates thousands of temporary jobs like event staff, security, stylists, DJs, makeup artists, and content creators thrive during this festive rush.



On the cultural front, Detty December represents something deeper. It's a collective release and celebration of African excellence, a time when Afrocentric fashion takes center stage, with silk two-pieces, ankara reimaginations, and bold accessories defining the street style. It's when the sounds of Afrobeats, Amapiano, and Highlife dominate every club, beach, and corner of the city. It's a moment of reconnection for Nigerians abroad returning home, for diasporans discovering their roots, and for locals showcasing the creative power of Lagos to the world.



From iconic concerts like The Experience, Afro Nation, Homecoming Festival, and Top musician concerts to grassroots carnivals in places like Lagos Island and Bariga, to random fest/ rave parties like Vibes the fest, Playoffs, to fashion popups diversity of events reflects the spirit of a city that never stops innovating. This period shows the world the unstoppable spirit of Lagos. December in Lagos is the ultimate playground, where memories are made, industries are built, and Africa's next generation of trailblazers find inspiration.



CULTURAL RENAISSANCE



THE PROGRESSION IN THE QUALITY OF FILM ACROSS WEST AFRICA

By Adebola Titilola

There was a time when the West African film scene was seen for quantity over quality, the industry only produced low budget movies. However in recent times, West Africa's film industry has moved into a golden age defined by good storytelling, cinematography, and global relevance. Countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire are stepping into the spotlight with refined narratives, rich visuals, and deeper investments in production.

Nigeria's "The Black Book," Senegal's "Atlantics," and Ghana's "The Burial of Kojo" are just a few films that have captured audiences with world class storytelling and production quality. These productions show a large improvement in screenplay development, acting, directing, and post-production which shows a shift towards excellence. The rise of streaming platforms like Netflix Amazon Prime and YouTube has provided both funding and an international stage for these films, making the actors and creatives meet global standards. Because of the improvement in the films and the visibility gained, most actors are now being featured in NOLLYWOOD movies as well.

Behind the scenes, film schools are helping emerging filmmakers anise their craft. Organizations like the Dakar-based Yennenga Center and Nigeria's EbonyLife Creative Academy are equipping the next generation with tools, networks, and exposure. With Actors showcasing better performance, Directors are tackling social issues and mental health through layered narratives while Cinematographers are using local landscapes and architecture to tell uniquely African stories with universal appeal.



SPECIAL FEATURE

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RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS FOR WEST AFRICA COMMUNITIES

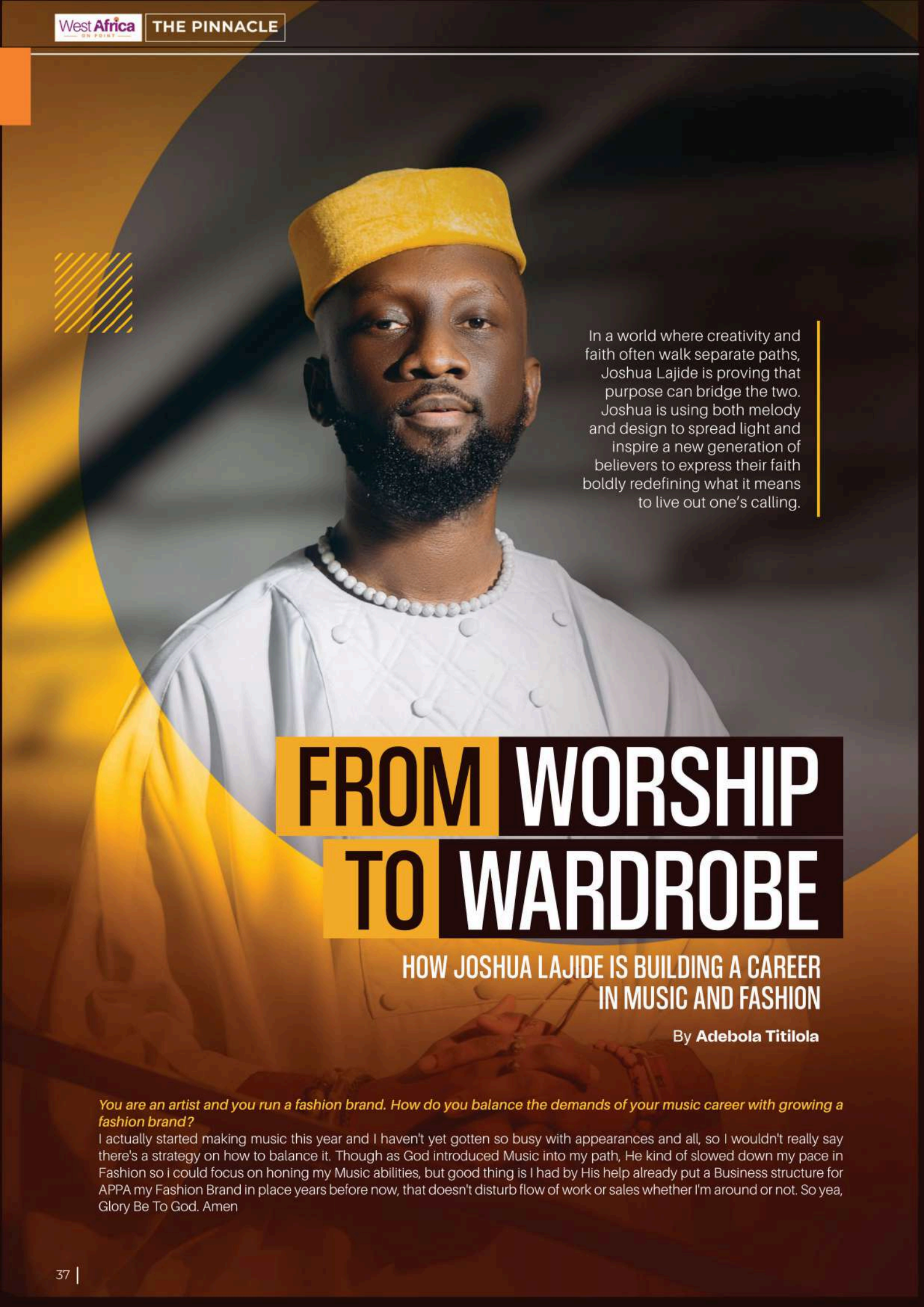
By Adebola Titilola

In communities dealing with unreliable or non-existent electricity, renewable energy is emerging as a lifeline. With almost half of the region's population lacking access to consistent power, solar panels and mini-grids are transforming homes, schools, and businesses. From the Sahel to the Gulf of Guinea, these solutions are bringing not only light but opportunity to millions.

At the forefront of this transformation is solar energy, made viable by the region's abundant sunlight. Startups and social enterprises like Solar Depot Nigeria are introducing pay-as-you-go solar kits, allowing families in off-grid villages to access clean energy without the burden of upfront costs. These systems are empowering students to study after dark, clinics to refrigerate vaccines, and traders to extend their business hours. In Nigeria, Senegal, and Ghana, government backed initiatives and private partnerships are accelerating access, proving that renewable energy isn't just environmentally sound but it's economically vital.

Local engineers are busy designing specific technologies like mobile powered solar inverters. Wind farms in coastal countries like Cape Verde are supplementing national grids, while agricultural waste is being converted into biogas in rural Nigeria. The flexibility and scalability of these energy sources are helping the region leapfrog traditional infrastructure challenges and move toward a cleaner, more inclusive energy future.

> ***As West Africa faces the dual pressures of population growth and climate change, renewable energy presents a solution. In the glow of solar lanterns and the hum of wind turbines, a new era is dawning one where power is not just delivered, but shared, sustained, and shaped by the people who need it most.***



In a world where creativity and faith often walk separate paths, Joshua Lajide is proving that purpose can bridge the two. Joshua is using both melody and design to spread light and inspire a new generation of believers to express their faith boldly redefining what it means to live out one's calling.

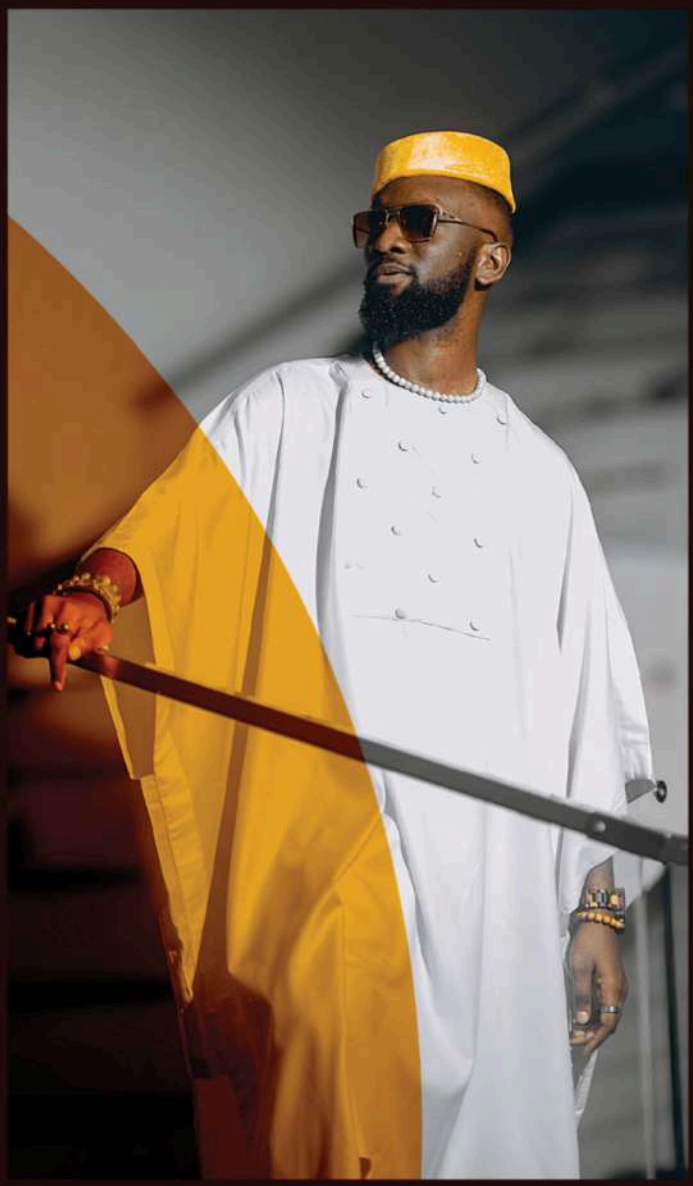
FROM WORSHIP TO WARDROBE

HOW JOSHUA LAJIDE IS BUILDING A CAREER IN MUSIC AND FASHION

By **Adebola Titilola**

You are an artist and you run a fashion brand. How do you balance the demands of your music career with growing a fashion brand?

I actually started making music this year and I haven't yet gotten so busy with appearances and all, so I wouldn't really say there's a strategy on how to balance it. Though as God introduced Music into my path, He kind of slowed down my pace in Fashion so i could focus on honing my Music abilities, but good thing is I had by His help already put a Business structure for APPA my Fashion Brand in place years before now, that doesn't disturb flow of work or sales whether I'm around or not. So yea, Glory Be To God. Amen



Can you tell us the story of how you first became interested in music?

Honestly sometimes it feels like I'm in a movie, and sometimes it's cringe to share, but here you go, I'd put it as simply as possible. Someone gave a prophetic word last year about Me doing Music, i totally dismissed it because i never intended pursuing Music. Then this year i started getting melodies, sometimes with words in my dreams, I'd wake up and mumble them into my phone(my phone is full of wake up voice memos of melodies downloaded from my dream), then I got producers Wondasounds and My Bro @Daccousticc that help me interpret the dream downloads into beats, then i layer words on them(I was a Poet/ Prose Writer on a low before I entered fashion, so it kinda makes it easier to put words on the melodies), and we have my songs made. It was difficult at first for me to accept that i was getting into music but I just kept following God's instructions by The Help of the Holy Spirit.

How would you describe your musical style or sound in your own words?

Heaven's Genre, it's basically whatever Heaven downloads for me to express and the Day to day inspiration of The HolySpirit, and as I have been sensing and interpreting-it can come in any type of sound - Rap, Afrobeats, Raggae, Fuji, Jazz, RnB etc, expressed in the liberty of the Word of God; with themes around Salvation, Deliverance, Victory, Worship Thanksgiving, Dominion, Wisdom, Celebration, Love, Romance, Culture, Life and Hope. It's The Gospel in Secular. I consider myself as just a Vessel of Divine Expressions.

Walk us through a typical day when you're working on new music.

- So I usually plan my recording sessions before hand, as my Producer doesn't live in-house with me. I have a mini studio here, so my Producer comes in here or we rent an AirBnB Shortlet, for a few days for The Music Camp. Mostly before the Music Camp, i already have the Main Inspiration for the songs, my Producer Wonda, helps interpret them into Amazing Beats and Pads, and then i can ideate my initial inspiration into a fully worded song, then we record the mainframe, backups, adlibs, layerings etc, we take breaks at intervals, resume after rest etc. We could make like 2-3 songs in a day. And ofcourse Prayer before, during and After The Sessions.

What led you to start your fashion brand, and when did that idea first form?

Fashion was the first thing I knew when I became a little aware. I'd buy clothes or shoes even as a teenager, and I couldn't sleep. I'd be watching them by my bed side all night long, dreaming of how and when I'd wear them. Fast forward to years later, in 2009 as a 100 level OAU economics student, ASUU went on strike, i went home, and as i had been disturbing my mom for years on wanting to learn tailoring, she took me to a tailors shop on her way to work one day, and that's where it all started. About a year later, the name Apparegalia was born, and the story goes on....

When you get stuck or hit a creative block with writing lyrics or coming up with a design, how do you push through it?

Hmmmm, honestly sometimes i just stay still and rest, other times i research very vigorously, like Pinterest for designs, or Spotify/Youtube for Music. Also as I continue to learn total surrender and partnership with the Holy Spirit, I ask Him for help and wait for His manifestation. He created the Heavens and The Earth, what is small design or melody or lyric He won't help someone who humbly asks Him?

What's been one of the biggest setbacks or failures in your entrepreneurial journey and what did you learn from it?

If i start to talk (laughs) na The full magazine e go contain o. Anyway let me think of the most striking;
I remember having my Store in Akure bulldozed, we built it back in a month even more beautifully. We were unarguably the Biggest Fashion Brand in Akure, Then we later switched from a Bespoke Model of business to Retail Model when we moved to Lagos and shut down our Akure branch totally, omo see shege o, all our customers left us due to our poor communication and also their grievance of us abandoning the Business model they were already used to. We had to build from scratch in Lagos, we suffered o(i could write a book about that time period) it took us a year to kind of get back on one of our feet. Now small brand don upgrade to a Global level, On God. I don't consider anything a failure really, cos for me every setback is a stepping stone, i mean you have to pull the catapult back for the reach of the stone to go far.

What are you currently working on that you want the world to know about?

Thank you for that question, I think by the time the Magazine will launch I'd be dropping an End of Year Thanksgiving Compilation titled YORUBA ANGEL, it contains 3 tracks. The title is inspired by me being a Godly cultured man as opposed to what the popular societal slang and expectation is and also, the songs in there are inspired by Dreamland melodies in Yoruba, ministered to me by the Angels of the Most High God.Also I'd be dropping our Debut Collection in our Gospel According To Fashion series - It's called a Collection of Miracles, it's inspired by The Bible Miracle Stories

CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

AMAPIANO

The Sound That Travels Round Africa and Beyond

By Adebola Titilola

Born in South Africa, Amapiano has grown from a local experiment into a continental rhythm. The genre that has not only defined South Africa's music culture but has also taken over dance floors across the world. Amapiano has grown into a cultural movement with its own dance styles and lifestyle. It is characterized by its deep house influence, jazzy piano chords, log drums, and soulful rhythms.

The sound, which means "the pianos" in Zulu, emerged in the early 2010s in South Africa's townships, particularly in Pretoria and Johannesburg. It began as an underground movement blending elements of deep house, Kwaito, and jazz, before it became a social media sensation buzzing in community parties. Unlike many genres that depend on mainstream radio or record labels for growth, Amapiano thrived through grassroots distribution and a culture of collaboration.

Nigeria, which is the heartbeat of Afrobeats, embraced Amapiano almost naturally. A couple of Nigerian artists have infused Amapiano elements into their hits, creating a fusion that resonates with both South African and West African audiences. Songs like Davido's Champion Sound with Focalistic and Asake's string of amapiano-inspired anthems have solidified the genre's popularity in Lagos clubs, radio stations, and street parties. Today, it's nearly impossible to attend a Nigerian party without hearing the log drums drop.

Some of the biggest names pushing Amapiano's global dominance are DJs and producers who have become cultural icons in their own right. DJ Maphorisa, often referred to as one of the pioneers of Amapiano, has consistently experimented with the sound, blending it with Afropop. His collaborations with Nigerian stars have made him a central figure in bridging the South African and Nigerian music scenes. Kabza De Small, known as the "King of Amapiano," has been instrumental in shaping the genre's sound, while his collaborative projects with DJ Maphorisa under the Scorpion Kings duo are globally acclaimed and have helped cement Amapiano as more than just a trend. On the other hand, Uncle Waffles, the young DJ who has







become the face of Amapiano's new wave, is known for her electrifying performances and energetic dance moves. She has captivated audiences from Johannesburg to Lagos, London to New York, representing how Amapiano is not just music but also performance, fashion, and lifestyle. Major League Djz have become synonymous with Amapiano's international breakthrough. The twins fused their diverse upbringing with a deep connection to the township roots of Amapiano. They're known for their electrifying performances and their popular "Balcony Mix Africa" series, Major League Djz helped take Amapiano beyond local clubs and into global spaces. From sold-out shows in London and New York to massive festival stages across Europe, they've given the sound an international passport. On the other hand, DBN Gogo, has created her own powerful space in the Amapiano scene, she is known for her dynamic sets that blend Amapiano with house and Afro-tech influences, she's been one of the genre's most consistent ambassadors. From TikTok dance challenges to packed concerts in Lagos, Amapiano is no longer just South Africa's pride but Africa's export to the world. Nigerian DJs are now incorporating it into their sets, while artists continue to experiment with blending Amapiano with Afrobeats and Hip-Hop. Amapiano is carving out a place on global stages, festivals, and streaming charts. Its success is proof of Africa's boundless creativity and the power of music to travel across cultures.





NEXT-GEN SUSTAINABILITY

THE BIG QUESTION:

Is GMO the Future Africa Really Needs?

By Asifat Oyewole

After reading this article, you will decide your final take on GMO in Africa. I want you to see where the facts, promises, and fears meet so you can draw your own conclusion. Genetic modification means altering the genetic material (the DNA) of a living organism inserting, removing or changing genes in order to produce traits humans want, like pest resistance or drought tolerance. The first widely known GMO in history was the Flavr Savr tomato in 1994, engineered to delay ripening so it could travel further without spoiling.

Developed countries have already seen advantages: crops engineered to resist pests mean fewer chemical sprays, higher yields, and sometimes reduced losses from disease or insects. For example, in the USA, Brazil, and Argentina, a large share of corn, soybeans, and cotton are genetically modified and have been in commercial use for decades, delivering economic gains to many farmers. But disadvantages have also surfaced: dependence on seed companies, fears of environmental damage (like superweeds or loss of genetic diversity), controversies over long-term health effects (though conclusive proof is often lacking), and concerns that GMOs may favour large producers over smallholder farmers.

So when I ask, "why bring GMO now in Africa when we have our indigenous crops?" I am thinking about things like the millet, sorghum, cowpea, yam, cassava, and other traditional crops which are well adapted to local soils, climates, pests, and cultural preferences. Our indigenous seeds carry generations of adaptation. They may not always produce the very highest yields under ideal conditions, but they are resilient. Introducing GMOs means risking loss of those old varieties through cross-pollination, or simply because farmers opt for seeds marketed as "better" or "easier," especially if indigenous seed resources are under pressure.

Recent events show this debate is intensifying. In Nigeria, for example, the government approved several new GMO crops, "TELA maize" varieties engineered for insect resistance and drought tolerance. The Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), a Nigerian ecological think tank, has pointed out concerns: that many GMO product approvals have been shrouded in secrecy; that corporate control over seeds could undermine food sovereignty; the risk of contamination of local genetic stocks; environmental degradation; and health implications.

Also in Nigeria, scientists, including Prof. Abdullahi Mustapha (Director-General of the National Biotechnology Research and Development Agency), have defended the safety of GMOs. He challenged critics to show scientific evidence that GMOs cause harm. He said the regulatory process (through the National Biosafety Management Agency, NBMA) ensures safety from research through to market.

[redacted]

"I believe that Africa cannot simply reject modern biotechnology out of fear, but neither can we accept it without skepticism. We must insist on strong, transparent regulation; on preserving indigenous seeds and crops; on independent safety studies; on protecting farmers' rights; on making sure that benefits are shared widely, not captured by a few. In the end, this is not a question of technology vs tradition, it is a question of which choices we make now that will shape generations. You decide: will Africa embrace GMOs as a tool among many, or will it be overwhelmed by promises without guarantees?"

[redacted]

Dr. Rose Gidado, of the Agricultural Biotechnology Department at NBMA, added that many Nigerians have consumed GMO foods unknowingly (from imports, feed, etc.), with no observed health problems.

But on the other hand, experts such as public health and food safety specialists in Nigeria are warning of health, environmental and security risks, demanding caution or even bans in some cases. For example, in May 2025, a workshop in Abuja saw experts calling for an immediate ban on certain GMOs and the herbicide glyphosate, citing possible links (though contested) to conditions like infertility, cancers, cardiovascular disease, and environmental harm.

In Kenya, the courts recently cleared the way for importation and cultivation of GMOs by dismissing petitions against lifting a long-standing ban. The High Court said there was insufficient scientific evidence to support fears. The government, researchers, farmers, and youth are now meeting in forums to build trust and ensure safety in biotech, acknowledging that regulation, transparency, and biosafety oversight are essential.

Now, where does Bill Gates come in? Gates is a major funder and advocate of agricultural innovation in Africa. He has renewed calls for GMO adoption, arguing that climate change, rapidly growing populations, and food insecurity demand new tools. For instance, during a visit to Nigeria, Gates pushed for faster regulatory approval of GMO seed varieties (drought tolerant, insect-resistant, etc.) to address hunger and malnutrition. He also supported greater investments in seeds, livestock genetics (chickens), and improving nutrition among children. In Ethiopia, Gates praised wheat farming progress, and the narrative around his engagements is that modern seed technologies are part of that progress.

Some see Gates' role as positive: bringing funding, technical capacity, and global connections. Others see risks: that foreign interests (corporations, philanthropists) may push Africa into dependency, that seed patents and intellectual property regimes may favour outsiders, that local farmers' voices and indigenous seed varieties might get sidelined.

What if GMOs became widespread in Africa without strong regulation and oversight? The advantages include faster progress in reducing hunger, greater resilience to climate shocks, more stable yields, and less need for pesticide sprays if pest-resistant GMOs work. But the disadvantages are serious: loss of original seeds, loss of biodiversity, environmental risks like gene flow (traits moving into wild plants), ecological disruptions, possibly unforeseen health impacts, economic risks if seed costs rise, or farmers become dependent on expensive inputs they cannot always afford. Health effects are debated: many African scientists assert that approved GMOs have been tested and found safe, and regulation is in place (e.g., NBMA in Nigeria, Kenya's National Biosafety Authority). Meanwhile, other health experts demand more long-term, independent studies, especially in Africa's varied environmental and nutritional contexts. Economic effects too could swing either way: boosting farmer income, reducing import bills, or increasing costs, creating new dependencies, possibly benefiting large land-owners more than smallholders, and potentially affecting trade if markets reject GMO produce.

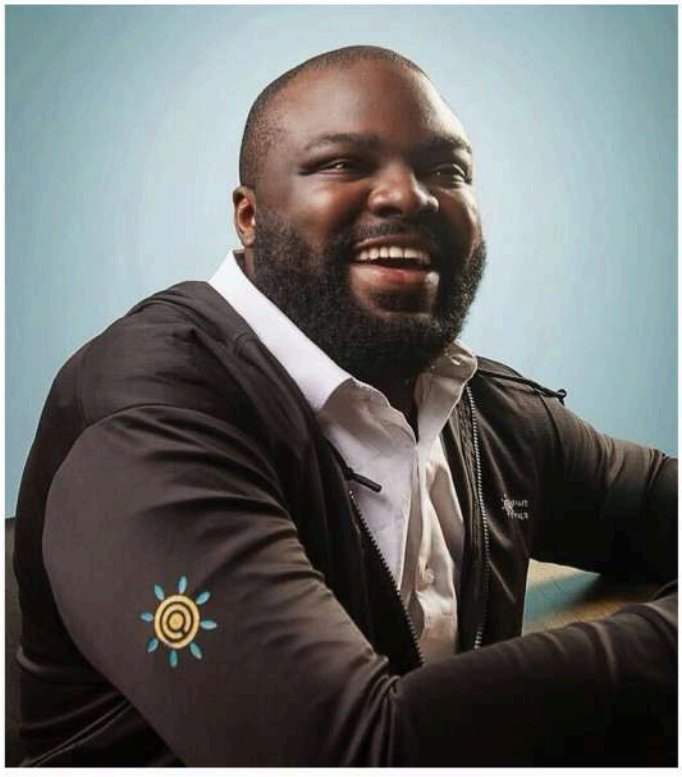


YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

IYINOLUWA ABOYEJI

Empowering Africa's Youth, One Bold Venture at a Time

By Benita Obajuobalo



Iyinoluwa Aboyeji is one of West Africa's most compelling examples of what happens when young people dare to dream beyond the usual horizons. Often called "E" by friends and colleagues, the Nigerian entrepreneur has spent the last decade helping to rewrite Africa's tech and investment story. But beyond building billion-dollar companies, what makes him extraordinary is how deeply he champions the empowerment of young Africans, turning raw potential into thriving opportunity.

At just 23, Aboyeji co-founded Andela, a company that set out to find and train Africa's brightest software developers and connect them with top global tech teams. He understood something many did not: that brilliance is everywhere, waiting for a chance. Today, thanks to Andela, thousands of young developers across Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, and beyond have moved from local cybercafés to writing code for companies in Silicon Valley and Berlin. They have become breadwinners, community leaders, and mentors in their own right.

Not long after, Aboyeji helped launch Flutterwave, a fintech platform that makes it easier for African businesses to accept payments from anywhere in the world. In markets where traditional banking systems can be painfully slow or exclusionary, Flutterwave became a vital tool for small traders and ambitious startups alike. It unlocked digital commerce for countless young entrepreneurs, many of whom now run online shops that serve customers far beyond their country's borders.

These successes could have been enough. But Aboyeji wanted more for Africa's youth than just software jobs and payment gateways. Through his current venture, Future Africa, he invests in young founders who are building solutions in health care, agriculture, climate, and education. He offers not just capital but mentorship, opening doors to networks that many would never have reached alone. He understands that money solves only part of the problem. What truly fuels transformation is confidence, vision, and knowing someone believes in your idea.

Aboyeji once said, "Brilliance is evenly distributed, opportunity is not." This simple belief runs through every speech he gives and every founder he backs. He is helping to replace old gatekeeping systems with a culture where young people across West Africa can take risks, learn fast, and build businesses that matter.

In a region where youth unemployment remains high and many still see success as something to be found abroad, Aboyeji stands as proof that young Africans can create prosperity right at home. By betting on their ideas and encouraging them to build for their own communities, he is shaping a generation that no longer waits for permission to innovate.

As young men and women across West Africa launch startups from tiny bedrooms, design apps that help farmers predict rainfall, or teach themselves to code through YouTube tutorials, they draw quiet inspiration from trailblazers like Iyinoluwa Aboyeji.

"His work is more than entrepreneurship. It is an act of profound faith in the next generation. And in lifting them up, he is not only changing lives, he is changing the future of an entire continent.



ANGELA DWAMENA-ABOAGYE

The Woman Building Safe Havens for Ghana's Women

By Benita Obajuobalo

There's a quiet power in the way Dr. Angela Dwamena-Aboagye walks into a room. She doesn't need to raise her voice or carry a banner to command attention. It's in her eyes; eyes that have seen too many tears yet still hold the soft glow of hope. In Ghana today, if there's a single woman whose work stands as a fortress against the relentless tide of gender-based violence, it is hers.

Angela could have had a comfortable life confined to courtrooms and conference halls. A lawyer by training and brilliant by every standard, she might have chosen a path that left her far from the bruised faces and frightened whispers of abused women. But her heart wouldn't let her. In the late 1990s, she saw how countless women in Ghana suffered violence behind closed doors, how they were urged by family and friends to "endure it for the sake of the children," and how the system offered them no refuge. Angela refused to stand by.

That's how The Ark Foundation was born, Ghana's very first shelter for battered women. A place with simple beds, warm meals, and staff trained not just to protect but to care. Women arrived there carrying suitcases stuffed with pain, some with children clinging to their skirts, many with nothing at all. Angela welcomed them all. She gave them therapists, skill trainers, legal aid, and, most importantly, a space to breathe again.

But Angela's mission was never just about walls and roofs. She wanted the laws to protect these women long after they stepped back into society. She became one of the tireless voices behind Ghana's Domestic Violence Act, pushing government after government to recognize that what happened in private homes was not a private matter but a national emergency. Police officers and judges have sat in her trainings. Policies carry her fingerprints. Across ministries, people still talk about "what Madam Angela said."

It would be easy to only see her as a fierce advocate in meetings and workshops. But in the communities, she is known simply as Mama Angela. She sits on worn-out plastic chairs listening to women pour out stories that would break most hearts. She visits girls rescued from early marriage, cheering them on when they return to school. In quiet moments, she laughs with survivors, dances with them, sometimes even cries with them.

Her work stretches far beyond Ghana's borders. In Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and other parts of West Africa, Angela has helped local groups set up their own shelters and counseling centres. She's shown women that even in places scarred by war or poverty, it's possible to build sanctuaries of safety and hope.

Today, thousands of lives carry Angela's invisible signature. There's the woman who left an abusive husband and now runs a thriving tailoring shop. The teenage girl who, instead of becoming a child bride, stood proudly in her school uniform. The little boys learning from their mothers and teachers that real men do not raise fists to prove strength.

" Angela Dwamena-Aboagye has proven that true change is never just about big speeches or tough laws. It's about standing with people in their darkest hours and helping them find light again. In the grand story of Ghana and indeed, West Africa her legacy will be written not only in legislation but in countless hearts healed, families rebuilt, and futures restored.
If anyone ever doubted whether one woman could truly make a difference, Angela's life answers with a gentle but resounding yes ".

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MEET 5 FEARLESS NIGERIAN WOMEN REDEFINING PURPOSE AND CREATING IMPACT

By Adebola Titilola

In a country where women are often expected to dim their lights to survive, be the next in charge and never the one frontline, some have chosen instead to shine even brighter and take charge. Nigerian women are trailblazing across industries and influencing change at scale. These five women are not just leaders, they are forces of nature, impacting millions with their brilliance, compassion, and conviction.



01

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

With a powerful combination of intellect and integrity, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala made history as the first African and first woman to become Director-General of the World Trade Organization. Her prior roles as Nigeria's Finance Minister saw her combat corruption and implement bold reforms that strengthened national finances. Today, she stands as one of Africa's most influential voices in global economic development using her position to advocate for vaccine equity, trade inclusivity, and African innovation on a global scale.



02

Aisha Yesufu

Few public figures are as passionately fearless as Aisha Yesufu. Best known as a co-convener of the #BringBackOurGirls campaign and a prominent face during the #EndSARS protests, Aisha is an unwavering advocate for justice and democracy. She has used her platform to call out government inaction and promote civic responsibility. Her boldness in the face of danger has made her a role model to women and youth across Nigeria, proving that one voice when rooted in truth can shake the status quo.



03

Ibukun Awosika

As the first female Chair of First Bank of Nigeria, Ibukun Awosika shattered one of the highest glass ceilings in the Nigerian corporate space. A passionate advocate for ethical leadership and entrepreneurship, she also founded The Chair Centre Group and co-founded the Women in Business, Management, and Public Service (WIMBIZ). Through mentoring programs and leadership forums, she is equipping the next generation of women to lead with both strength and integrity.



04

Temie Giwa- Tubosun

In a country where access to basic healthcare can be a matter of life or death, Temie Giwa-Tubosun launched LifeBank. A revolutionary health tech company that delivers blood and critical medical supplies in record time. Her innovation is saving lives in real time, and her model has gained international recognition from entities like the World Economic Forum and Bill Gates. Temie is a shining example of how innovation, when rooted in empathy, can change the world.



05

Funke Akindele

Actress, producer, director, mentor and cultural icon. Funke Akindele has redefined what it means to be a woman in Nollywood. Her record breaking films not only entertain but often carry deep social themes, mirroring the realities of everyday Nigerians. She is also among the few entertainers to cross over into politics, bravely contesting for the Lagos Deputy Governorship. Whether behind the camera or at a campaign podium, Funke is using her influence to spark real societal conversations, led change and mentor the youth.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

YOUNG PEOPLE TAKING THE STAGE

How West Africa's Youth Are Rewriting Leadership

By Benita Obajuobalo

Across West Africa, young people are no longer content to stand on the sidelines, waiting politely for their "turn." In city squares and village councils, through ballot boxes and buzzing hashtags, they are stepping boldly onto the stage, determined to be architects of the future they will inherit. It's a wave of fresh energy, a gentle rebellion against politics as usual, and a living testimony to youth empowerment in its most urgent, tangible form.

In Senegal, it was young artists and activists who galvanized crowds to demand accountability through the "Y'en a Marre" movement. In Burkina Faso, it was largely students and first-time voters who toppled a three-decade regime. From Nigeria's digital protests to youth-led town councils in Sierra Leone, there is a quiet revolution reshaping governance across the region. These aren't simply moments of resistance; they're blueprints for new leadership.

At the heart of this is a profound shift in mindset: young people today see politics not as an exclusive club for the old, but as a duty for everyone. With unemployment biting and quality education still uneven, many are realizing that real change requires more than protests, it demands taking seats in parliament chambers, local councils, and policy drafting tables. They are driven by the simple belief that the problems of youth can only be properly addressed by youth themselves.



Nowhere is this spirit more vivid than in Ghana, where a new crop of young politicians is rising to meet the moment. Among them stands Ekow Vincent Assafuah, who, at just 33, became Ghana's youngest male Member of Parliament in the 8th Parliament. Representing Old Tafo, he is more than a fresh face in old corridors — he is a symbol of what happens when young people decide to stop waiting for permission and start leading.

Ekow's journey from a small community in Anomabo to Ghana's parliament floor is stitched together by empathy and relentless drive. He didn't simply campaign on lofty promises; he has remained deeply embedded in his constituency, regularly meeting students, unemployed graduates, and market women to understand exactly what they need. From pushing for new skills centres and digital training programs to advocating for small business support, his work is a living model of youth empowerment turned policy.

What makes Ekow's story remarkable isn't just his age, but how he carries it. He treats leadership not as a throne but as a shared burden. On social media, he speaks plainly about legislative work, posts from local clean-ups, and invites young people to challenge him, reminding everyone that governance is a collective effort. As Ghana's Deputy Minister for Local Government, he's now overseeing initiatives that link national resources directly to youth-focused projects, proving that youthful leadership can be both visionary and grounded.

Ekow Vincent Assafuah isn't an isolated success; he's part of a continent-wide narrative where young people are choosing ballots over bitterness, policies over passive complaints. They are showing that the stage is theirs to build upon, brick by purposeful brick.

"In the end, this isn't just a story of one young MP or even of Ghana alone. It's the dawning of an era where West Africa's most daring dreams are being drafted by those who will live to see them unfold. And perhaps that's the most powerful testament to youth empowerment: a generation refusing to inherit a future they didn't help design.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

YOUNG WOMEN IN TECH

Rewriting the Future of West Africa

By Benita Obajuobalo

Across West Africa, young women are stepping into spaces their mothers never dreamed of, writing code, founding startups, and proving that the future of technology on the continent belongs to them as much as anyone else. From the bustling streets of Lagos to Accra's co-working hubs, and from Dakar's innovation centers to small classrooms in Freetown, they are breaking barriers with laptops in hand and the hopes of countless girls watching them dare to dream.

In many communities, tradition still shapes careful paths for women. It nudges them toward careers considered safer or more familiar. Yet this new generation is boldly choosing a field long seen as a man's world. Instead of typing lessons, they're learning Python. Instead of hemming fabric late into the night, they are debugging stubborn lines of code. They are building platforms that help farmers predict crop yields, designing fintech tools that let market traders accept digital payments, and crafting e-commerce sites that take local crafts far beyond village borders.

Take Nigeria's Ire Aderinokun, a front-end developer and user experience designer who became the first female Google Developer Expert in Africa. Self-taught, she devoured online resources and slowly carved a name for herself in a global industry. Through her startup Helicarrier, she's making it easier for Africans to receive and hold stable currency, opening financial doors that were once firmly closed. In Ghana, Regina Honu is another trailblazer. She started Soronko Academy to teach girls and women coding, robotics, and digital skills, nurturing a new wave of creators who see technology as their rightful domain.

Many of these young women didn't have formal pathways laid out for them. They found free coding classes online, joined Telegram groups where strangers became mentors, and celebrated small wins that grew into life-changing moments. Their social media feeds are now dotted with snippets of JavaScript, screenshots of their first working apps, and joyful posts after landing freelance gigs that earn more in a month than their families once did in a year.

But what makes this movement so powerful isn't just individual success. Once these women figure things out, they reach back to pull others along. They start tech clubs at universities, run weekend classes in their neighborhoods, and teach girls as young as thirteen how to build websites. They share links to remote jobs and scholarships, and rally around each other's milestones. They are transforming what could have been lonely journeys into shared spaces of learning and encouragement.

None of this comes without resistance. They still face quiet biases, skeptical relatives, and at times open dismissal from those who believe technology is a man's arena. Many juggle these ambitions with family expectations around marriage and homemaking, finding creative ways to honor tradition while carving out futures that look entirely different. Each website launched and digital solution deployed chips away at old ideas, replacing them with living proof that women can lead, innovate, and thrive in technology.

It's easy to imagine these young women one day running Africa's top software firms, leading labs that solve urgent health challenges, or advising presidents on digital policy. But even now — working from tiny hostel rooms or with babies strapped to their backs during online classes — they are already changing the story. They're showing little sisters, neighborhood girls, and even their own mothers that tech does not belong to men alone. Breaking into it isn't just possible. It's happening.

"Across West Africa, young women in tech are not waiting for permission. They are building solutions that matter, stepping boldly into spaces once closed to them, and lighting a path that countless others will surely follow. If ever there was reason to believe in the boundless promise of this continent's future, it lives in their determined eyes, inventive hands, and unshakeable spirit.



THE QUEEN OF RECYCLING

How Isatou Ceesay is Turning Plastic into Power in The Gambia

By Benita Obajuobalo



In Njau, a modest town nestled within The Gambia's sunbaked fields, plastic once seemed to grow like weeds. Thin bags tangled in fences and bushes, clogged waterways, and littered the dirt roads children used as playgrounds. Goats and cows often fed on them, dying slow, painful deaths with bloated stomachs full of waste. For many, this was simply life. But for Isatou Ceesay, it was a problem that demanded a solution.

Affectionately known today as the "Queen of Recycling," Isatou's journey began quietly back in 1997, when she and a small circle of five women decided they couldn't just stand by any longer. They started gathering discarded plastic, washing it, cutting it into strips, and crocheting it into simple purses and bags. Neighbors laughed at first. Why on earth would anyone pick up trash to make handbags? But curiosity soon replaced ridicule when the finished products began fetching money in local markets, turning what once choked their environment into a modest but meaningful income.

That modest idea grew into a movement. Isatou went on to found Women's Initiative Gambia (WIG), a community-driven organization that now has over 2,000 members spread across 40 communities. Through partnerships with bodies like the European Union and the UNDP, these women have received training not just in recycling, but also in literacy, leadership, and small business management. It's a holistic approach that is transforming households. Today, many women who once relied entirely on their husbands or sons can pay



school fees, buy livestock, and make decisions that impact their families with new confidence.

At its core, Isatou's initiative is still about turning waste into something valuable. By reimagining plastic as a resource rather than a nuisance, her work has cut down on carbon emissions and offered a local, tangible solution to a global environmental problem. From bags and stools to colorful beads and compost, nearly everything they make carries a dual purpose: it beautifies homes while cleaning up the streets.

International recognition has naturally followed. In 2012, Isatou received the World of Difference Award from The International Alliance for Women, and in 2016 she was spotlighted by Green Matters for her efforts to protect the planet. Yet despite these global honors, her roots remain firmly planted in the local soil. Most days, you'll still find her seated with groups of women on woven mats, sorting through plastic and planning the next market day.

Isatou's story is a powerful reminder that change doesn't always start with massive budgets or sweeping government programs. Sometimes, it begins with one woman refusing to accept a problem as permanent. From a humble gathering of five under a tree to a thriving national network that has cleaned up communities and lifted thousands out of quiet economic hardship, Isatou Ceesay's work proves that with vision and heart, even the most ordinary acts like picking up a piece of plastic can reshape futures.

"Maybe that's the real beauty of it all: how a handful of discarded bags and a few determined hands can transform not just waste, but entire lives, into something new, quietly powerful, and deeply worth holding on to.



SOMTOCHUKWU IFEZUE, ODUNAYO EWENIYI, & JOSHUA CHIBUEZE

THE TRAILBLAZING JOURNEY OF PIGGYVEST CREATION

By Cynthia Obinatu

In December 2015, a viral tweet showcased a woman saving ₦365,000 by depositing ₦1,000 daily into a wooden piggy bank. This inspired Joshua Chibueze to consider digitizing this traditional saving method. He shared the idea with Odunayo Eweniyi and Somtochukwu Ifezue, his colleagues from Covenant University and co-founders of their previous venture, PushCV. Together, they developed PiggyBank.ng, launching it in January 2016 as a digital platform to help Nigerians automate their savings.

By April 2016, PiggyBank.ng was fully operational, allowing users to save small amounts regularly through their smartphones and earn interest. The platform quickly gained traction, and by the end of 2018, it had over 53,000 users who had collectively saved nearly a billion naira. In April 2019, the company rebranded to PiggyVest, expanding its services to include investment opportunities, thereby helping users grow their funds through both savings and investments.

The founders' journey is one that's marked by perseverance. Before PiggyVest, they had experienced failures with eight different startups, including 500Dishes and 99Startups. However, their experience with PushCV, which had over a million users, provided valuable insight's that contributed to PiggyVest's success. Their commitment to addressing real financial needs in Nigeria played a crucial role in the platform's growth.

The company's growth attracted significant attention. In 2017, PiggyVest secured $50,000 in funding from Village Capital, which helped refine its business model and revenue streams. Subsequent investments and strategic partnerships, including the acquisition of Abeg Technologies (later rebranded as PocketApp), expanded its financial services ecosystem.

Today, PiggyVest stands as a testament to the impact of innovation and resilience in addressing financial challenges. With over 7 million users, the platform continues to empower Nigerians to take control of their financial futures through accessible and culturally relevant solutions.

SPECIAL FEATURE



THE GLOBAL CREATIVES HANGOUT

The Global Creatives Hangout is an emerging and dynamic international creative event shaping the future of cross-continental collaboration. With an active presence across three continents, seven countries, and more than ten cities and continuously expanding. The platform sits at the intersection of culture, innovation, and global community-building. It convenes multidisciplinary creatives to exchange ideas, forge strategic partnerships, and access opportunities that elevate their careers on a global scale.

Driven by a commitment to excellence and global connectivity, the initiative has quickly become a catalyst for the next generation of creative leaders.



MISSION
To empower creatives globally by providing structured access to community, resources, and strategic opportunities that support long-term growth, visibility, and sustainable creative impact.

VISION
To establish a globally influential creative ecosystem that connects talents across borders, fosters cross-cultural collaboration, and accelerates the development of creative economies in key regions around the world.



This footprint spans Africa, Europe, and North America - three continents.
The network is expanding to; Kenya, Ethiopia, Georgia, Portugal, Ghana and more.
With its rapidly growing global presence, the Global Creatives Hangout continues to strategically enter new markets as part of its mission to build a truly borderless creative community.

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YESIDE OLASIMBO

THE HUMANITARIAN VOICE EMPOWERING CLIMATE ACTION IN WEST AFRICA

By Cynthia Obinatu

"Her journey as a changemaker proves one thing: when you use your voice to lift others, the impact is endless.

Born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria, Yetunde Gold grew up in a large, polygamous family where she quickly learned the value of hard work and standing out purposefully. As the youngest of her mother's children and the only daughter of her father, she carved her own path early - first through filmmaking, then into humanitarian work. Today, she's best known as the founder of the Blue-Lily Humanitarian Empowerment Initiative, where she helps communities hardest hit by climate change find new ways to survive, grow, and thrive.

Through Blue-Lily, Yetunde is focused on turning awareness into action. Her projects teach everyday people - especially women and youth - how to deal with real challenges like flooding, food shortages, and unemployment. Ranging from tree-planting campaigns to supporting eco-friendly small businesses, she's bringing practical solutions to places that are often overlooked. Her work has taken her from local neighborhoods to global climate talks, where she speaks up for those who are rarely heard.

As a climate advocate, filmmaker, and aspiring political leader, Yetunde Gold embodies a new era of changemakers - women who are rewriting the narrative of leadership in Africa, touching lives, restoring hope, and planting seeds of change across the nation.



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT



Leading the Charge for Financial Inclusion in Nigeria

By Cynthia Obinatu

Tunji Andrews is changing the way millions of Nigerians think about retirement savings. As the CEO of Awabah, a digital pension platform, he's on a mission to bring financial security to workers outside the formal sector, those who have long been left out of Nigeria's traditional pension system.

In Nigeria, most pension plans focus on government workers or employees in big companies. But the majority of Nigerians work in the informal economy – traders, artisans, small business owners, who often don't have access to pensions. Tunji saw this gap as both a problem and an opportunity.

Under his leadership, Awabah has developed a simple, mobile-friendly platform that makes it easy for informal workers to save for the future. Instead of complicated paperwork and long waits, users can open pension accounts using just their phones. This digital approach is helping to close the huge financial inclusion gap in the country.

Tunji's vision goes beyond technology. He believes leadership means building trust. For many Nigerians, pensions can feel like a distant or confusing concept. Awabah invests heavily in educating its users about why saving early matters and how their money is protected.

Since its launch, Awabah has grown quickly, gaining millions of users and earning recognition as a key player in Nigeria's fintech scene. Tunji's focus on accessibility, transparency, and user education reflects a leadership style grounded in empathy and practical solutions.

His work also highlights the role young African leaders are playing in shaping industries that were once seen as too complex or exclusive. By breaking down barriers and designing products for real people's needs, Tunji Andrews is helping build a more inclusive economy, one pension at a time.

TUNJI ANDREWS



TRADITION, CELEBRATION AND FESTIVALS IN WEST AFRICA BY ADEBOLA TITILOLA

In Nigeria, festivals are more than mere celebrations or parties. They are cultural lifelines that preserve memory, identity, and tradition. Across the country's diverse regions, every drumbeat, masquerade, and gathering carries a story passed down from one generation to another. These festivals are not only artistic expressions but spiritual, social, and economic engines, drawing both locals and global visitors into the heart of Nigeria's cultural soul.

From the streets of Lagos to Ijebu Ode to the hills of Osogbo, festivals animate the landscape all year-round.

The Osun Osogbo Festival for instance, is a spiritual homecoming for the Yoruba people and a visual feast of ritual, reverence, and beauty. In the East, the New Yam Festival (Iri Ji) welcomes harvest season with pomp, dance, and colorful regalia. In the North, the Argungu Fishing Festival transforms a riverbank into a fierce, joyful contest, blending sport with age-old tradition. The most popular festival in Nigeria right now causing attraction is Ojude Oba (The King's Forecourt) by the Ijebu people.

The festival has so much effect that universities like Lagos State University (Lasu) decided to do something similar to celebrate Yoruba culture as well and instead of doing different families, it was represented by the different departments

What's most powerful about Nigerian festivals is how they bridge the past and present. They serve as platforms where ancient customs meet modern interpretation.

Afrobeats artists now perform alongside traditional dancers. Fashion designers debut collections inspired by cultural attire. Creators, tourists. and locals post moments live on social media which blends digital culture with ancestral practice. In this way, festivals have become dynamic storytelling hubs, where heritage is not only preserved but reimagined

Economically, these festivals are goldmines.

From hotel bookings to markets, food vendors to fashion stylists. local businesses thrive during festival seasons. States like Cross River, home to the iconic Calabar Camival, have turned culture into commerce.

For many Nigerians. festivals are also a form of soft power. It's a way of showcasing who we are without sayig a word.

In a country so rich in ethnic and linguistic diversity. Nigerian festivals are one of our strongest unifying forces. They remind us that joy, tradition. and community are still deeply embedded in our identity. As the world turns its eye toward African culture. Nigeria's festivals stand as vibrant proof that our stories, our spirits, and our celebrations are worthy of the global stage.

Here are ten cultural celebrations that truly define the West African experience.

1.Osun-Osogbo Festival (Nigeria)
Held annually in Osogbo, this sacred Yoruba festival honors the river goddess Osun. Devotees clad in white pay homage with offerings and processions to the Osun Sacred Grove. It is a vibrant fusion of spirituality, tradition, and communal bonding that has earned UNESCO recognition.

2. Homowo Festival (Ghana)
Celebrated by the Ga people, Homowo translates to "hooting at hunger." It commemorates a period of famine and celebrates the bounty of harvest. Drumming, dancing, and the preparation of kpokpoi mark this energetic event.

3. Durbar Festival (Nigeria & Niger)
A regal display of horse-riding, traditional drumming, and Islamic customs, the Durbar is held during Eid celebrations. It showcases the martial and cultural pride of the Hausa-Fulani people with spectacular cavalry parades and elaborate attire.

4. Chale Wote Street Art Festival (Ghana)
This contemporary arts festival takes over the streets of Jamestown, Accra annually with bold murals, performances, film screenings, and fashion parades. It celebrates urban culture and has become a beacon for Pan-African creative expression.

5. FESPACO (Burkina Faso)
The Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO) is the continent's most prestigious cinema event. It brings together filmmakers and storytellers from across Africa, championing African perspectives through film.

6. Lake of Stars Festival (Gambia edition)
This music and arts festival is done in Gambia with an electric mix of Afrobeat, poetry, and international music. It celebrates Pan-African cultural connections and promotes tourism through creativity.

7. Eyo Festival (Nigeria)
It is also known as the Adamu Orisha Play. This Lagos-based festival features white-clad masqueraders (Eyo) wielding staff as they dance through the city. It's a tribute to departed souls and ancestors and is rooted in Yoruba cosmology.

8. Fiesta des Masques (Ivory Coast)
Celebrated by the Dan and Guéré people, this festival showcases traditional mask dances believed to channel ancestral spirits. The vibrant colors, elaborate costumes, and hypnotic rhythms capture Côte d'Ivoire's spiritual heritage.

9. Voodoo Festival (Benin)
Held in Ouidah every January, this festival honors the Vodun religion, which is widely practiced in Benin.
Participants engage in rituals, drumming, and spirited dances to invoke deities and honor ancestors, bridging ancient spirituality with modern culture.

10. Gerewol Festival (Niger and Chad)
A unique celebration of beauty and courtship among the Wodaabe people. Men dress in elaborate attire, paint their faces, and perform dances to attract female attention. It is a striking inversion of gender norms and a proud display of nomadic heritage.

These events do more than celebrate culture—they stimulate economies, preserve languages, and encourage intergenerational storytelling. They empower artisans, draw in diaspora tourism, and provide platforms for young creatives to reclaim African narratives.



CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

THE EFFECT OF WEST AFRICAN CULTURE IS INFLUENCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

By Adebola Titilola

In the heart of West Africa, a new entrepreneurial spirit is rising. One that doesn't just borrow from culture, but is deeply shaped by it. From the way brands tell their stories, companies show what they stand for, West African entrepreneurs are weaving traditional values, customs, and aesthetics into modern business practices. It's a renaissance where innovation and identity walk hand in hand. Part of the African culture that still has impact is group savings systems like Nigeria's "ajo" or Ghana's "susu" which has led to the rise of cooperatives, community-funded ventures, and tech firms like Piggyvest, Moni and Cowrywise. These systems have not only enabled grassroots financing for small businesses but have also strengthened trust and accountability in ways that formal banking systems struggle to replicate. In a region where access to capital remains a barrier, cultural practices are filling the gap with community-driven innovation.



West African language and stories are also redefining how entrepreneurs brand and market their products. From street vendors to tech startups, founders are embracing indigenous languages, proverbs, and folklore in their advertising, making their messaging not just relatable but deeply rooted. A soap company that invokes the healing traditions or a fashion label that names collections after Yoruba deities is not just selling a product but a piece of identity. In doing so, these businesses command loyalty and emotional resonance.

West African fashion entrepreneurs have particularly mastered the art of blending cultural expression with commercial appeal. Brands like Orange Culture in Nigeria, Christie Brown in Ghana, and Pathé'O in Côte d'Ivoire use native fabrics, patterns, and cuts as both a design signature and a cultural statement. Beyond aesthetics, these designers embody culture where being proudly African is not a limitation but a launchpad into global relevance. Their success shows that cultural authenticity, when paired with business can cross borders and break stereotypes.

Even with businesses, actions are shaped by cultural values. The respect for elders and hierarchy influences organizational structures, while oral mentorship traditions are alive in informal apprenticeships across industries. In local markets, the concept of good name or "omoluabi" (in Yoruba culture) still carries more weight than a signed contract or making wealth in a corny manner. Reputation, honor, and personal relationships often determine success sometimes than business pitches which forces entrepreneurs to cultivate both cultural intelligence and strategic trust.

In the end, West African culture isn't just influencing entrepreneurship but redefining it. By building on the foundation of culture, community, storytelling, tradition, and pride, the region's entrepreneurs are showing the world that business doesn't have to imitate the West to succeed. It can rise from within.



CLICKS, CARTS & COMMERCE:

The Rise of Online Marketplaces in West Africa

By Adebola Titilola

Part of the effect of digital technology in West Africa now is the reshaping of how goods and services move one click at a time. Over the last decade, West Africa has witnessed a significant transformation in commerce, which is a cause of the rise in marketplaces apps and websites. From Freetown to Cotonou, Lagos to Accra, entrepreneurs and consumers are embracing a new era of digital trade.

Traditionally, trade in West Africa thrived on bustling physical markets and stores but with rapid internet penetration and a digitally savvy youth population, the tide has turned. Platforms like Jumia, Konga, Glovo,Temu,PayPorte and a wave of social commerce like TikTok, X and Instagram are driving a new narrative of convenience and accessibility. Whether it's fashion, electronics or food delivery, online marketplaces are connecting millions across borders, boosting African trade and giving rise to a vibrant digital economy.

Part of what led to digital adoption was COVID-19 and West Africa was not left out. Lockdown pushed many SMEs to pivot online almost overnight. Grocery apps surged, delivery services increased and e-payment platforms became mainstream. What began as a crisis response soon turned into an opportunity for long term growth. Companies like Flutterwave and Paystack have since provided the payment backbone for many e-commerce platforms, while logistics startups are solving the delivery problem, one package at a time.

The future of West African e-commerce is dynamic, borderless, and increasingly powered by homegrown innovation. As digital access spreads more, online marketplaces could redefine prosperity and opportunity across West Africa. From clicks to carts, commerce in the region is undergoing a metamorphosis.

CULTURAL RENAISSANCE



CULTURAL COUTURE

The Fusion of West African Identity in Contemporary Fashion

By Benita Obajuobalo

In recent years, West African fashion has captured global attention; not as a passing trend, but as a force shaped by history, craftsmanship, and cultural pride. Across the continent and beyond, designers are pushing boundaries while staying grounded in their roots, using fashion as a medium to reflect identity and inspire the world.

This rise didn't happen overnight. West Africa has long been home to rich textile traditions, with each fabric carrying symbolic meaning. The structured elegance of Aso-Oke in Nigeria, the vibrant storytelling woven into Ghana's Kente, the bold geometry of Mali's mud cloth—these are not simply materials used to make clothes. They are expressions of ancestry, status, occasion, and belonging. What we see now is how those age-old expressions are being transformed and reinterpreted through contemporary fashion.

Designers like Nigeria's Lisa Folawiyo are leading the charge. Her ability to elevate Ankara through hand embellishment and tailored silhouettes has set a new standard for African luxury fashion. Ghana's Christie Brown blends tradition and modernity with collections that speak to the stylish African woman navigating both heritage and the present-day world. Cameroon's Imane Ayissi continues to gain international recognition for his work on the Paris couture scene, using African textiles to challenge Western perceptions of elegance and sophistication.

These creatives are not operating in isolation. They represent a broader movement and it is one that is driven by the desire to control the narrative surrounding African fashion. For decades, African prints and aesthetics were adopted by the West without context or credit. Today, African designers are changing that. They are telling their own stories, building their own brands, and shaping global fashion conversations on their own terms.

This movement is also deeply generational as young West Africans are engaging with fashion in personal and innovative ways. Through social media, fashion events, and cultural campaigns, a new wave of creatives are styling traditi in on with a modern edge. Agbadas are paired with sneakers, Adire shows up on crop tops, gele becomes street style. These choices aren't only about style but also about visibility. About being seen as African, stylish, and current, all at once.

What makes this shift so powerful is its authenticity. West African fashion today isn't trying to copy global trends—it's creating its own. Designers are drawing from personal stories, local crafts, and cultural knowledge, proving that there is room for the past and the future in every piece.

This fusion of culture and couture is building something long-lasting. It's not only influencing global runways, it's also changing how West Africans view themselves. There's a growing pride in wearing pieces that reflect who we are; pieces made by our people, for our people, with the world watching.

As African fashion continues to grow, so does its responsibility. The goal is not just global recognition, but sustainability, inclusion, and a deeper connection to the communities that keep the traditions alive. From the dyers in Abeokuta to the weavers in Northern Ghana, every link in the fashion chain matters, and must be protected.

West African fashion is not a costume or a borrowed aesthetic. It is a living, evolving language that speaks through texture, pattern, colour, and craft. And right now, that language is resonating across continents.





SHERRIE SILVER

BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR AFRICAN YOUTH

By Benita Obajuobalo

Sherrie Silver, a Rwandan-born choreographer and philanthropist, has transformed her passion for dance into a powerful tool for social change. Gaining international acclaim for choreographing Childish Gambino's "This Is America," which earned her the Best Choreography award at the 2018 MTV Video Music Awards, Silver has since dedicated herself to uplifting African youth through the arts.

In 2019, she founded the Sherrie Silver Foundation in Kigali, Rwanda, aiming to provide underprivileged children and young adults with opportunities to develop their talents.



The foundation offers free classes in dance, music, and English, along with vocational training and weekly meals, serving over 500 youths. Silver's initiative not only nurtures artistic skills but also fosters self-confidence and community engagement among participants.

Beyond her foundation, Silver serves as an ambassador for Malaria No More and was appointed the first Advocate for Rural Youth by the United Nations' International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 2019. Through these roles, she advocates for health and development initiatives targeting rural communities across Africa.

Silver actively engages with her audience on social media platforms, using her presence to highlight the achievements of the youths she mentors and to raise awareness about critical issues affecting African communities. Her work exemplifies how creative expression and advocacy can intersect to drive meaningful change.



In recognition of her impactful efforts, Silver was honored at the TIME100 Impact Awards, dedicating the accolade to "all African girls who dared to make their dreams a reality." Through her unwavering commitment to empowering the next generation, Sherrie Silver continues to inspire and effect positive transformation across the continent.

SPECIAL FEATURE

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OBIMZY PROPERTIES

turning dreams into realities

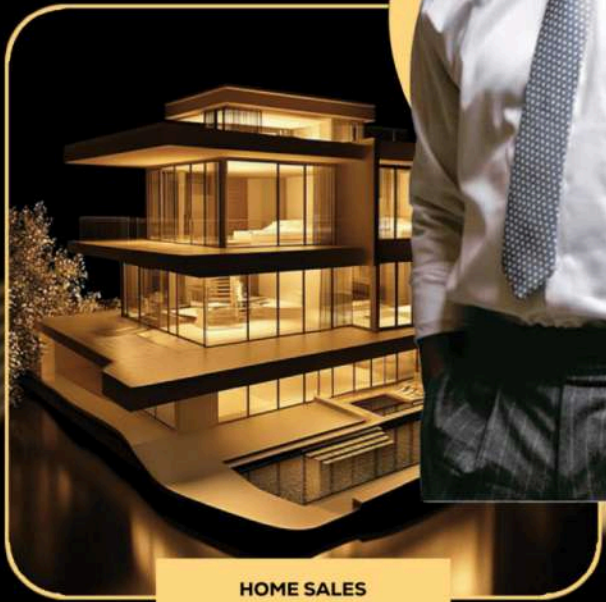
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ESTATE DEVELOPMENT







HOME SALES



GENERAL CONTRACTORS

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CULTURAL RENAISSANCE



LEADING FASHION BRANDS IN WEST AFRICA REDEFINING THE CULTURE

By Adebola Titilola

West Africa's fashion scene has evolved into a powerhouse of creativity, heritage, and modern flair. From the busy Lagos streets to the cultural hubs of Accra, Dakar, and Abidjan, fashion brands are not just creating clothes but they're shaping identities. Fashion brands like Nigeria's Orange Culture, Ghana's Christie Brown, and Senegal's Tongoro are leading a new wave that blends traditional aesthetics with international trends. These brands present the wears in a cultural narrative that speaks boldly and unapologetically for African excellence.

Orange Culture, led by Adebayo Oke-Lawal, has redefined menswear by exploring themes of gender fluidity and African storytelling. Christie Brown by Aisha Ayensu, crafts elegant designs that celebrate femininity through handwoven fabrics and patterns that celebrates Ghanaian culture. Meanwhile, Tongoro, created by Sarah Diouf, champions accessible luxury and pan-African pride with its made-in-Africa pieces.

These brands are revolutionizing the industry by empowering local artisans and fostering sustainable practices. Most of these fashion brands have lead to economic growth because of the jobs created in tailoring, textile production, and design, elevating fashion from a passion to an economic force. Their commitment to ethical sourcing and community collaboration is helping to preserve traditional crafts and also becoming visible to global markets.

These brands have gained international attention having runways on major international fashion shows and being featured in Vogue, showcased at Paris Fashion Week, and worn by global celebrities. Their influence is not just stylistic but deeply cultural.

As more brands emerge and collaborations deepen across borders, West Africa's fashion revolution continues to challenge the norm. This new era is defined by innovation, pride, and a refusal to be boxed in. West African fashion is no longer just about looking good but about wearing identity, making statements, and rewriting history one stitch at a time.

CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

THE RISE OF AFROBEAT IN WEST AFRICA

By Adebola Titilola

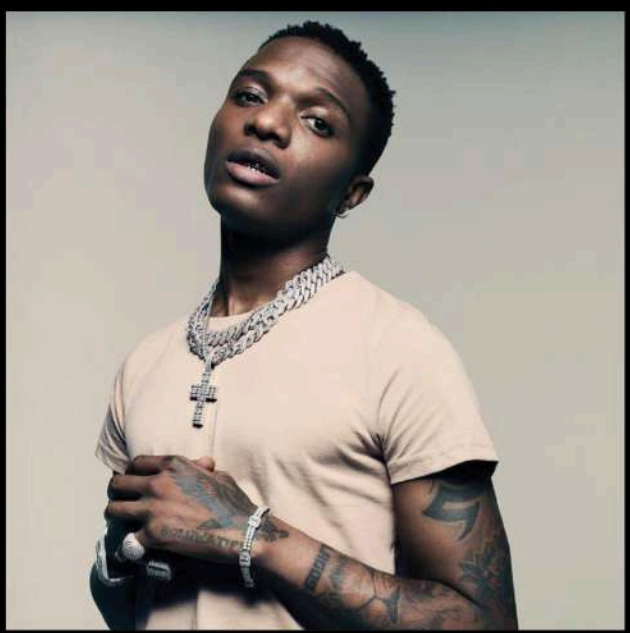


There's something unmistakable about Afrobeat. It hums through Lagos traffic, echoes in Accra bars and rises with the tide in Freetown. Afrobeat is the pulse of West Africa. Before the Billboard charts, Coachella stages, and Grammy speeches, there were studios in Surulere, makeshift microphones in Ajegunle, and beats crafted on borrowed laptops by producers who believed in magic before the world did. The rise of Afrobeats isn't just a story of sound but a story of hustle, culture, and resistance dressed as rhythm.

The 2000s brought us 2Baba with African Queen, D'banj with Oliver Twist, and P-Square with global bangers that made African parties in London and Atlanta feel like Lagos. But it was Wizkid's Ojuelegba, Davido's Fall, and Burna









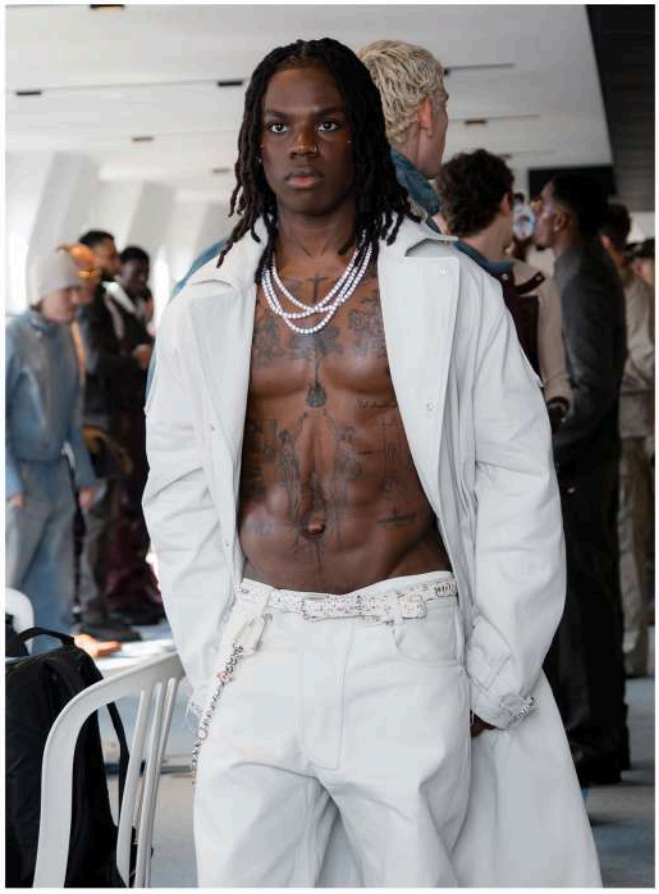
Boy's Ye that cracked the walls. African music wasn't just playing in African homes, it was playing globally.

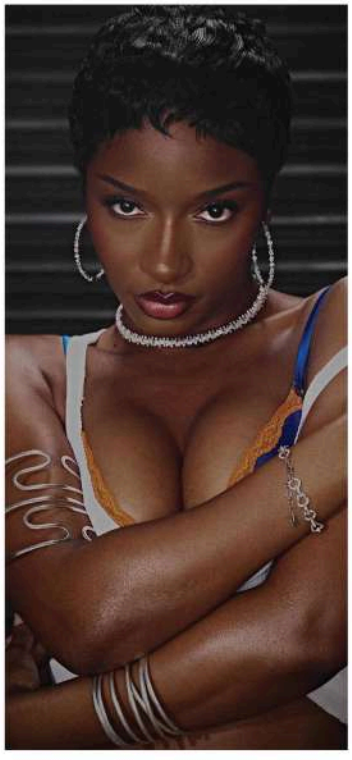
Afrobeats artists are now some of the most streamed musicians in the world. Wizkid has over 7 billion total Spotify streams, Burna Boy surpassed 6.3 billion, with his song "Last Last" alone crossing 500 million streams , Davido has earned over 2 billion streams, while Tems and Rema follow closely with 2.6 billion and 3.8 billion, respectively.

In 2024 alone, Spotify paid out approximately ₦58 billion (about $38 million) in royalties to Nigerian artists which was a massive jump from the previous year.

And it didn't stop in Nigeria. Ghana gave us the azonto wave that had streets across continents bending knees and breaking backs. Artists like Sarkodie, R2Bees, King Promise, and Stonebwoy painted their own rhythms into the rising mural of Afrobeats, making it clear this wasn't a Nigerian movement, it was West African at heart.

Aside from the streams, there has been progressive growth in events, endorsements and shows. A combined Lagos and Accra festival circuit draws 80,000+ attendees annually

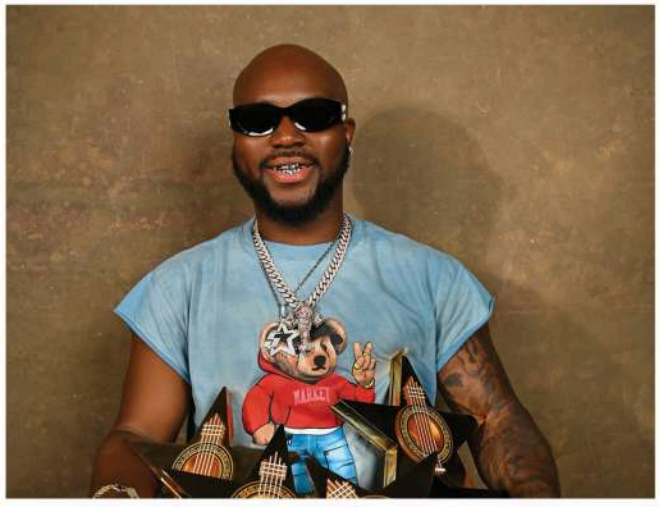






and racks up 200+ million social media views. Major festivals like Island Block Party, Flytime Festival, and Palmwine Festival showcase top-tier artists like Burna Boy, Davido, Ayra Starr, and Tems, drawing local and global audiences throughout the season. Meanwhile, Vevo reported nearly 4 billion global views for Afrobeats and Amapiano videos in 2023.

Today, Afrobeats is the beat behind brand campaigns, Netflix soundtracks, runway shows in Milan, and dance challenges that cross oceans in seconds. Producers like Sarz, Kel-P, Juls, and Masterkraft have become sonic architects, exporting the street sounds of West Africa to clubs in Tokyo and Berlin. The genre's power is not just in music but in fashion, tech, film, and branding as most Artists are now global ambassadors.



"What makes Afrobeats so powerful isn't just the beat but the cultural defiance beneath it. West Africa has forced the world to dance to its drum. And perhaps, that's the sweetest part of this rise.Afrobeat is not just music, It's a movement.

CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

FIVE WEST AFRICAN DESIGNERS YOU SHOULD KNOW

By Benita Obajuobalo

Fashion in West Africa is beyond aesthetics; it is identity, resistance, storytelling, and reinvention. Across the region, generations have passed down traditions of weaving, dyeing, embellishing, and tailoring. But what today's designers are doing is something even more extraordinary—they are honouring tradition while redefining the future.

From the streets of Lagos to the ateliers of Accra, from Parisian runways to digital fashion weeks, West African designers are proving that African creativity is not only on the rise but it has arrived. Bold, intentional, culturally rooted, and globally admired, these designers are shaping narratives and influencing how the world sees Africa.

Here are 5 West African designers you absolutely need to know, each one a force of vision, identity, and fashion excellence.

01



LISA FOLAWIYO

NIGERIA

Lisa Folawiyo is one of the most prominent names in Nigerian fashion, and for good reason. She didn't just embrace Ankara prints; she redefined them. At a time when African wax prints were still seen as "local" or reserved for cultural events, Lisa saw potential. With her label Jewel by Lisa, she fused traditional fabrics with exquisite tailoring and delicate hand embellishments, turning everyday prints into high-end fashion statements.

Her designs are unmistakably Nigerian yet unmistakably modern—structured skirts, embellished jackets, and detailed separates that exude sophistication. What sets Lisa apart is her ability to merge heritage and luxury seamlessly. Her work has been worn by celebrities like Solange Knowles, Lupita Nyong'o, and Issa Rae, and featured in global fashion media. But despite her international recognition, Lisa remains deeply committed to telling African stories through fashion: stories of strength, identity, and bold beauty.

AISHA AYENSU

(Christie Brown)

GHANA

When Aisha Ayensu founded Christie Brown in 2008, she was inspired by her grandmother, a Ghanaian seamstress. That personal connection remains visible in every piece she creates. Christie Brown has since grown into one of Ghana's most beloved fashion houses, known for feminine silhouettes, detailed craftsmanship, and Afrocentric elegance.

Her work brings traditional Ghanaian motifs and textiles into sleek, modern designs with rich embroidery, flared sleeves, tailored pantsuits, and flowing gowns. Aisha has shown that African fashion doesn't need to "catch up" to global standards; it creates its own standards. She's dressed powerful women across the continent, and her collections are a masterclass in honouring African roots while embracing modern femininity.

02





03

ADEBAYO OKE-LAWAL
(Orange Culture)
NIGERIA

Adebayo Oke-Lawal is a designer; a storyteller, a disruptor, and a cultural voice. Through his brand Orange Culture, founded in 2011, Adebayo has challenged the rigid gender norms of African fashion by creating pieces that are fluid, expressive, and deeply personal.

From sheer shirts and vibrant trousers to androgynous tunics, his designs push conversations around identity, masculinity, and emotion. He often draws inspiration from his own life, using fashion as a way to explore the softness and complexity of African men. His work has been featured at London Fashion Week and in global publications like Vogue and Dazed. The label, Orange Culture is a movement, one that redefines African fashion as a space of freedom and self-expression.

IMANE AYISSI
CAMEROON

Cameroonian designer Imane Ayissi is one of the very few African designers to have shown on the official Paris Haute Couture calendar and that alone is historic. But his story goes deeper. A former professional ballet dancer and model, Imane brings grace, discipline, and heritage into everything he creates.

He works primarily with indigenous African fabrics such as Kente, Faso Dan Fani, and Bogolan, using them to create dramatic, sculptural garments that challenge Western ideas of couture. Ayissi's designs are often described as art, not only for their beauty but for the philosophy behind them. He is a vocal advocate for authentic African representation in fashion and refuses to let the continent's rich textile traditions be sidelined or misused. Every piece he makes is a quiet rebellion—elegant, proud, and deeply intentional.

04



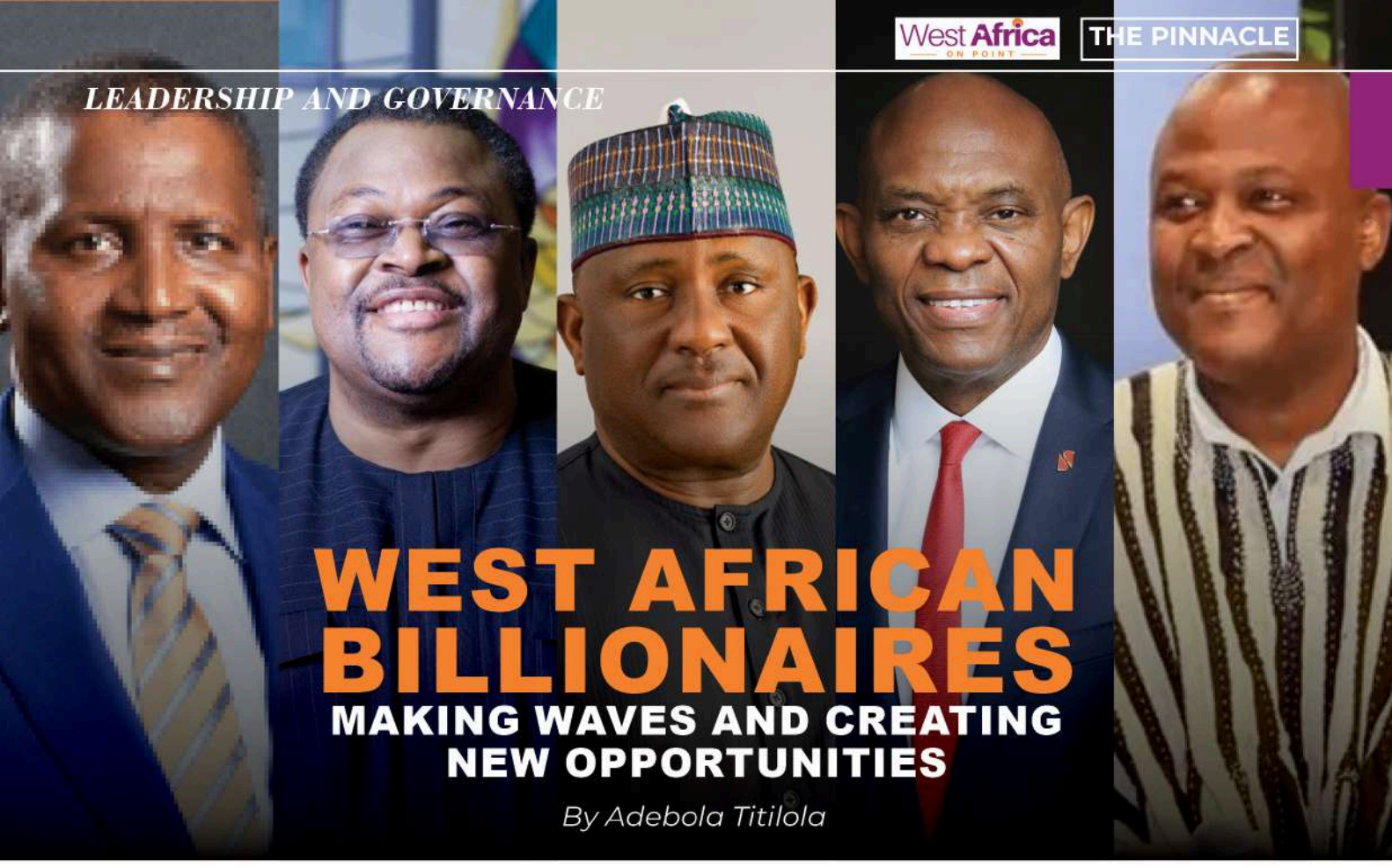


05

SARAH DIOUF
(Tongoro)
SENEGAL

Based in Dakar, Sarah Diouf is the founder of Tongoro, a brand that represents both ease and excellence. Tongoro offers affordable, ready-to-wear African fashion made entirely on the continent. Sarah's goal is simple but profound: to create clothing that celebrates African beauty while supporting African craftsmanship.

Her designs are bold, free-flowing, and camera-ready. Wide-brimmed hats, flowing dresses, co-ord sets; all made with confidence and simplicity. Beyoncé, Burna Boy, and Alicia Keys have all worn Tongoro, but the brand's real power lies in how it champions accessibility and ethical production. Sarah is building more than a label, she's building an ecosystem.



WEST AFRICAN BILLIONAIRES

MAKING WAVES AND CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

By Adebola Titilola

In a region framed by stories of economic struggle and instability, a new narrative is taking shape of West African billionaires who are not only amassing wealth but also reshaping the future of their countries. From Nigeria to Ghana and beyond, these moguls are empowering the next generation, and investing in industries that promise lasting transformation.

Aliko Dangote, often dubbed Africa's richest man, remains a towering figure in the economic landscape of West Africa. His empire, anchored by the Dangote Group, spans cement, sugar, salt, and most recently, petroleum. The launch of the Dangote Refinery, the largest single-train refinery in the world, marks a bold stride towards energy independence for Nigeria. But more than wealth accumulation, Dangote's ventures create thousands of jobs and stabilize sectors crucial to regional development.

Not far behind is Abdul Samad Rabiu, founder of BUA Group. Rabiu's strategic investments in cement and food production have strengthened Nigeria's manufacturing capacity and helped reduce reliance on imports. He is also redefining philanthropy by committing millions of naira to education, healthcare, and social development, creating a direct bridge between corporate success and societal growth.

Ghana's own billionaires are equally changing the game. Ibrahim Mahama, a mining magnate and younger brother of former President John Mahama, is not just a symbol of enterprise but a visionary building a legacy. Through Engineers and Planners, his company employs thousands and expands Ghana's capacity in infrastructure. Meanwhile, his Dzata Cement is shaking up the cement industry, pushing for indigenous ownership in a space long dominated by foreign players.

These billionaires are fostering ecosystems of opportunity that uplift SMEs, support youth innovation, and unlock new sectors. Tony Elumelu, through his foundation, has empowered over 18,000 young African entrepreneurs across 54 countries. What makes this generation of West African billionaires distinct is their multi-layered impact. They are investing in fintech, agribusiness, renewable energy, and creative industries. They fund startups, support creative talent, and collaborate with global partners to build scalable solutions. They are not just chasing profits; they are shaping policy, reimagining what is possible, and building regional pride.

As the world's attention increasingly turns to Africa, West African billionaires are seizing the moment. They are crafting a legacy that goes beyond generational wealth. They're building one rooted in empowerment, innovation, and a firm belief that West Africa can compete, not just survive, on the global stage.

NEXT-GEN SUSTAINABILITY

Future-Proofing Culture:

How MOWAA is Shaping Sustainability for the Next Generation

By Benita Obajuobalo

Sustainability is often pictured in forests or oceans, measured by carbon credits or solar panels. But in the heart of Benin City, Nigeria, a different kind of sustainability is taking root; one that nurtures stories, skills, ecosystems, and pride. The Museum of West African Art (MOWAA) isn't just preserving history; it's actively building the future of heritage, conservation, and community resilience for a new generation.

Rising across 15 acres on land carved by the ancient moats of the Benin Kingdom, MOWAA is designed to be more than a museum. It's a living campus where past, present, and future meet — with art galleries, archaeological labs, rainforest gardens, creative studios, and community spaces all woven together. By doing so, it's answering a question few development agendas ask: how do we make culture itself sustainable?

The impact starts with local opportunity. MOWAA's upcoming Institute, designed by the celebrated Adjaye Associates in partnership with Nigerian architects MOE+, will train West African archaeologists, conservators, and heritage managers in cutting-edge methods. It's also partnering with Oxford University to strengthen technical expertise on the continent, ensuring that young professionals have both the knowledge and facilities to protect their own cultural legacy. This goes beyond exhibitions; it builds careers, businesses, and pride rooted in local narratives.

Yet MOWAA's vision stretches into ecology too. At the heart of its campus will be a rainforest garden, a deliberate re-greening of urban Benin City that reconnects people with indigenous flora. It's a living classroom where school children and visitors alike can learn about biodiversity, traditional plant knowledge, and why climate resilience starts right at home. Across the grounds, tree-planting efforts are restoring green cover and creating micro-climates that soften city heat — a subtle but powerful nod to environmental stewardship woven into a cultural project.

When it opens its doors with the exhibition "Nigeria Imaginary: Homecoming," featuring works returning from the Venice Biennale, MOWAA will offer more than art on walls. It will stand as proof that heritage, economic inclusion, and environmental care are not separate goals. They're deeply linked. This is sustainability built on stories, skills, and stewardship — all anchored in local soil.

For West Africa's next generation, the ripple effects could be profound. Young artists will find residencies and mentoring. Local guides and vendors will benefit from new streams of cultural tourism. Students will explore labs that decode ancient technologies alongside gardens that restore native tree species. Entire communities will see that preserving the past can be one of the smartest ways to secure the future.

In a world that often treats culture as ornamental or disposable, MOWAA is rewriting the script. It shows that sustainability also means protecting the knowledge systems and creative traditions that make a people who they are. In doing so, it hands the next generation not only a thriving ecosystem, but also a living, breathing sense of identity. And that may be one of the most enduring forms of sustainability there is.



NEXT-GEN SUSTAINABILITY

ROOTED FUTURES

Rural Innovation That's Changing West Africa

By Benita Obajuobalo

In the heart of rural West Africa, a new chapter is being written; one led by visionary leaders using ingenuity to tackle age-old challenges. In villages and cities, sustainability is emerging not from policy halls but from community hands, blending tradition with innovation to create lasting change.

One of the most compelling leaders of this transformation is Dr. Richard Munang, a Cameroonian climate and development expert whose career spans from local village work to global platforms. As the Africa Regional Climate Change Coordinator at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Munang has been a driving force behind empowering communities to adopt climate-smart farming, organic pest control, and small-scale renewable energy inspired by local realities. Through programs like the Ecosystem-based Adaptation to secure food across West Africa, he's helped farmers install simple solar pumps and build cooperative groups that turn degraded lands into flourishing farms. In doing so, Munang is not just studying climate; he's equipping villages to withstand it.

In Niger, Mariama Mamane has taken rural innovation a step further. Winner of UNEP's Young Champion of the Earth prize, she saw how invasive water hyacinths were devastating fishing and slowing down village life. Her company, Jacigreen, trains local youth to harvest these weeds—not to abandon the land but to renew it. The invasive plants are converted into organic fertilizer and biogas, which restore nutrients to the soil and fuel cookstoves in households that once burned wood. The result is cleaner rivers, richer harvests, fewer trees cut for firewood, and new income for families rooted in their own communities.

The impact of Dr. Munang and Mariama's work is simplified but profound. Munang's initiatives bring ministers, scientists, and farmers together, creating resilience rooted in local soil. Mariama's Jacigreen offers villages a circular economy, transforming waste into wealth and giving youth a reason to stay rather than migrate.

These stories are part of a growing tapestry: solar-powered mills that replace backbreaking manual grinding in rural Ghana, youth-run boreholes in Burkina Faso, and coop-led mango drying barns that preserve harvests long after the first rains. Each innovation carries lessons: technology must meet tradition, solutions must come from the bottom up, and sustainability is strongest when it's tied to daily livelihoods.

Across West Africa, this wave of rural ingenuity is more than innovation—it's renaissance. It redefines "development," not as a race to the city, but as holistic growth rooted in purpose and place. The real triumph lies not just in cleaner land or bountiful fields, but in renewed hope: that villages can thrive on their own terms, and that the future of sustainability begins under familiar hands and familiar skies.



Dr. Richard Munang



Mariama Mamane

INNOVATION IN TECH AND BUSINESS



HOW TOSIN ENIOLORUNDA IS TRANSFORMING AFRICAN FINANCE

By Adebola Titilola

Tosin Eniolorunda went from being a curious student in Ibadan to a leading figure in African fintech. As the Founder and CEO of Moniepoint Inc., Tosin has emerged as one of the most influential figures shaping the future of African finance through transformative systems built to serve the underserved.

Raised in Ibadan, Nigeria, Tosin earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Obafemi Awolowo University, It was then that he began tinkering with software and hardware solutions. After university, he joined Interswitch, one of Nigeria's foremost electronic payment companies, where he worked for five years. His role as a software engineer and later a product manager gave him deep insights into the financial technology ecosystem in Nigeria.

In 2015, Tosin co-founded TeamApt (now Moniepoint Inc.), with a mission to build enterprise software for banks. The company quickly found its footing, developing backend infrastructure for major Nigerian financial institutions. In 2019, he switched TeamApt to Moniepoint when he understood that change needed to go beyond banks and reach people directly. Moniepoint is a digital financial services platform that empowers everyday Nigerians with reliable tools to run and scale their businesses. Moniepoint offers what many traditional banks could not like: quick access, simple onboarding, real-time support, and a deep understanding of local business needs. Because the company focuses on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), Tosin has been able to tap into the real heartbeat of Nigeria's economy.

By 2023, Moniepoint was processing over ₦8 trillion in monthly transactions. It had become Nigeria's largest non-bank financial institution by volume, serving over 1.6 million businesses and reaching over 33 million people indirectly through those businesses. Their POS terminals are a common sight in every corner of Nigeria.

The company doesn't only offer payment processing but also tools such as working capital loans, business management solutions, employee tracking systems, payroll tools, and insurance.

In 2023, it was named Africa's fastest growing fintech by the Financial Times. Under Tosin's leadership, Moniepoint became a case study in how African problems require African designed solutions.

> ***"In an age where the buzz of "innovation" often overshadows substance, Tosin Eniolorunda stands out as a rare visionary.***



CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

NOLLYWOOD'S DIGITAL POWERHOUSES:

The TV Channels Ruling YouTube

By Benita Obajuobalo

Nollywood has always been known for its ability to adapt, evolve, and take ownership of its own narrative. Long before streaming giants began spotlighting Nigerian films, Nollywood producers were already using YouTube as a broadcast platform, running their own independent TV channels online, and building direct connections with millions of viewers—locally and globally.

What started as a solution to limited cinema screens and distribution bottlenecks has now grown into a full-fledged ecosystem. Today, YouTube is home to Nollywood's biggest and most active film channels, where fresh movies premiere daily, web series trend in real-time, and producers control every part of their content—production, distribution, and engagement.

These channels are not side projects; they are Nollywood's own digital TV stations. For many producers, YouTube has become the main stage where their films are watched, celebrated, and monetized. They are not waiting for cinema releases or licensing deals to tell their stories. They are writing, directing, and broadcasting directly to audiences worldwide, growing their platforms into powerful brands in their own right.

With millions of subscribers and hundreds of millions of views, these Nollywood YouTube TVs have become cultural hubs, entertainment destinations, and global showcases for Nigerian storytelling. They are proof that Nollywood's reach is no longer defined by traditional media structures—it's built by the producers themselves, one upload at a time.

In this feature, we spotlight 12 Nollywood producers who have successfully turned their YouTube channels into blockbuster TV platforms. From industry veterans to digital trailblazers, these are the creatives running Nollywood's most-watched online cinemas, shaping how Nigerian films are consumed across the world.



Ruth Kadiri – RuthKadiri247

RuthKadiri247 is one of Nollywood's biggest digital powerhouses. Launched on March 15, 2014, it has grown into a platform with over 3.24 million subscribers and 526 million views from just 164 videos. As an actress, writer, and producer, Ruth has been at the forefront of Nollywood's shift to YouTube, creating a space where her films can thrive beyond the limitations of cinema screens and the threat of piracy. She is known for her romantic dramas and family-centered stories, Ruth's content consistently hits over 1 million views per film, with loyal audiences awaiting every new drop With her background in Mass Communication and Business, she's not just making films; she's building a model for how Nigerian stories can be produced, distributed, and owned by their creators.



Uchenna Mbunabo – Uchenna Mbunabo TV

Uchenna Mbunabo TV is one of Nollywood's biggest YouTube platforms, pulling in over 2.99 million subscribers and more than 660 million views from just 205 videos. Launched on April 10, 2013, the channel is the digital home of veteran producer and scriptwriter Uchenna Mbunabo, showcasing his wide range of films under One & Two Film Production.

From hits like My Everlasting Love to Celebrity Marriage, Uchenna has consistently delivered stories that resonate across borders. He is one of the key players shaping Nollywood's presence online, blending his knack for storytelling with industry advocacy and smart digital reach



Maurice Sam – Maurice Sam TV

Maurice Sam TV is one of Nollywood's rising digital powerhouses, with 1.86 million subscribers and over 333 million views from just 96 videos. Launched on June 5, 2013, the channel is run by actor and producer Maurice Sam, who has taken charge of his craft by self-producing many of the films his fans love to binge.

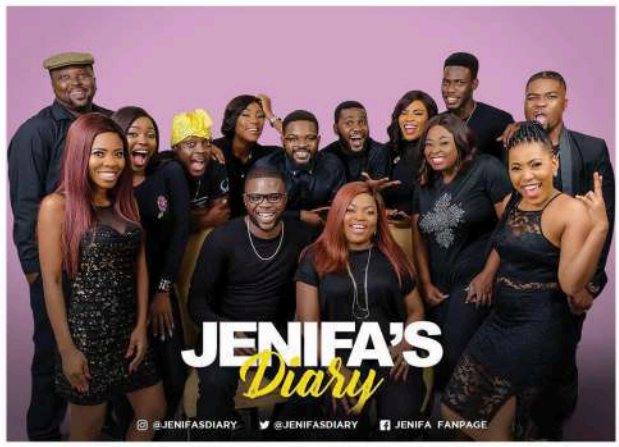
From his breakout role as Acid in Hustle to his appearance in Netflix's Blood Sisters, Maurice has built a solid fan base that follows him beyond the screen. With titles like Steal My Heart and Twice the Love, he's become one of the fresh faces leading Nollywood's YouTube wave, turning his channel into a go-to space for heartfelt stories and relatable characters.



Omoni Oboli – Omoni Oboli TV

Omoni Oboli TV may have launched just in December 2023, but it's already a major force with 1.34 million subscribers and over 277 million views from 600+ videos. Known for dropping fresh, premium Nigerian movies every single week, the channel is a reflection of Omoni Oboli's commitment to consistent, audience-first storytelling.

A seasoned actress and producer, Omoni didn't stop at just one channel. She also runs a French-language sister channel, taking Nollywood stories to even more global viewers. With this platform, she's proving that Nollywood films can thrive beyond the cinema, directly on screens anywhere in the world.



Funke Akindele – FAAN TV

Funke Akindele's FAAN TV is one of Nollywood's busiest and most vibrant YouTube channels. Since launching on June 9, 2015, it has grown to 1.29 million subscribers, pulled in over 335 million views, and dropped more than 2,400 videos and this is a clear reflection of Funke's unstoppable work ethic.

Home to fan-favorite shows like Jenifa's Diary, FAAN TV blends film, comedy, and web series all in one place. Known as Nigeria's box office queen, Funke has used this platform to push her influence beyond cinema halls, building a digital empire that reaches audiences globally while staying rooted in relatable, homegrown storytelling.





THE UNDER 40S
LEADING THE POLICY CONVERSATION AND BECOMING VOICES OF TOMORROW

By Adebola Titilola



All over West Africa, the youths are stepping boldly into spaces once reserved for seasoned leaders. These trailblazers under the age of 30 are refusing to wait for the future but instead are actively building it. Driven with passion, innovation, and fearless determination, they are becoming influential voices in policy, governance and activism.

In Nigeria, young changemakers like Odunayo Eweniyi, co-founder of the Feminist Coalition and PiggyVest, and Rinu Oduala, the executive project director of Connect Hub Nigeria have redefined what youth activism looks like. Alongside them, Hamzat Lawal, founder of Connected Development (CODE), is new standards for civic engagement and transparency.

Aside from Nigeria, a similar wave of youth leadership is occurring in Ghana, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. Figures Mawuse Ziegbe, a passionate advocate for digital rights and data privacy, are shaping the national conversation. Kofi Asante, a rising policy researcher, is contributing fresh ideas to governance reforms in the country. Cheikh Fall, founder of the Sunu2012 movement, utilized digital platforms to demand more accountable governance. Similarly, Fatou Warkha Sambe has become a leading voice for gender equality and the empowerment of Senegalese women. Edith Brou, a digital entrepreneur and tech policy advocate, is driving discussions around digital innovation and youth empowerment. Figures like Ulrich Sossou, though primarily known in the tech world, are influencing education policy through impactful youth initiatives. Ishmael Beah, who rose from the harsh realities of child soldiering to become an international advocate for children's rights.

Social media has become a powerful tool making it easy for these under-30 leaders to voice out. Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, TikTok are used to mobilize communities, influence legislative processes, and amplify underrepresented voices.

"More than just participating, they are setting the agenda, changing perceptions, challenging norms, and reshaping leadership across West Africa.

Beyond activism, many are entering formal political spaces, contesting elections and advising governments. Their presence is shifting perceptions about youth and leadership, proving that vision, not age, is the true measure of a leader.



The rise of these young policy influencers signals a turning point for West Africa.

DIVA GISELE

REDEFINING MEDIA & BEAUTY IN EAST AFRICA

By Adebola Titilola



We had a conversation with Tanzania media personality and entrepreneur Diva Gissele Malinzi and she shared a bit about herself, what she's working on and how she stands as a woman of impact.

1. Can you tell us a bit about yourself, your background and what inspired you to start your journey?

My name is Diva Gissele Malinzi, also known as Divatheebawse. I'm a Tanzanian Media Personality, entrepreneur, and founder of Diva Media Africa and Diva Rose Beauty. My journey began with a deep love for storytelling and a desire to amplify voices, especially those of African women. Coming from 88.5 Clouds Fm, I have been there for more than 13 years then moved to wasafi Media. I knew I had something powerful to share, and I wanted to build something greater than just a name, I wanted to build a legacy.

2. You wear many hats, media personality, entrepreneur, philanthropist. How do you stay centered in your purpose?

I stay grounded by remembering why I started and the impact. I wake up every day with intention, knowing that my voice, my work, and my platforms are meant to inspire, educate, and empower. Prayer and discipline helps me stay aligned with my purpose.

3. Many know you from Wasafi FM, but you've built a brand that transcends beyond radio. How intentional was that transition?

That transition was very intentional. I knew my voice could do more than entertain you know, it could shift culture and create change. So, I began building my brand outside the studio, creating content, developing businesses, and connecting with audiences beyond airwaves. I wanted to be more than a radio host or Face of Tanzania Media, I wanted to be a movement.

4. What inspired you to start Diva Media Africa and the dream behind your skincare brand Diva Rose Beauty?

Diva Media Africa was born from a passion for storytelling and ownership,started as a blog. I wanted a platform that could spotlight untold African stories, especially for women. Diva Rose Beauty, on the other hand, is about self love. As someone who has always believed in beauty from within, I wanted to create a skincare line that helps women feel confident, radiant, and powerful in their own skin.

5. As a woman leading in an industry often dominated by men, what has your experience been like navigating that space?

I've had to prove myself twice as hard, stand firm in rooms where I was underestimated because of my soft voice, and build spaces where women are seen and heard. But I wear my crown with pride, and every challenge has only made me more unstoppable.

6. As a woman of impact for those in East Africa and beyond, what women inspired you growing up?

I've been inspired by strong African women.My grandma was the first. Media icons like Oprah Winfrey , Late Amina Chifupa , Salama J, South Africa Finest Bonang Matheba, Nonhle Thema and successful African women who broke barriers taught me that greatness has no gender. They gave me the courage to dream bigger.

7. What advice would you give to young African women who are building their personal brand or trying to find their voice?

Own your story then live it love it, Don't shrink yourself for anyone. Be consistent, be bold, and remember, your voice matters. The world doesn't need another copy, it needs your truth, your magic, your fire.

8. What project or passion are you currently working on that you want us to know about?

I'm currently expanding Diva Media Africa and working on launching a podcast studio to support new African voices. I'm also growing Diva Rose Beauty and taking it international. The vision is big, and this is just the beginning.



ELSA MAJIMBO'S

RISE TO GLOBAL FAME FROM ONE CHIP AT A TIME

By Adebola Titilola

Elsa Majimbo, the Kenyan-born comedic sensation who stayed making people laugh with little more than a bag of chips, a pair of vintage sunglasses, and razor sharp wit. She transformed moments of lockdown boredom into a career-defining global movement.

Her rise didn't come from a traditional entertainment background. Elsa's authenticity was a breath of fresh air. She wasn't trying to impress but just trying to express and exist, loudly and the world noticed. She didn't have a team or a strategy, what she had was a phone, a sense of humor, and an unbothered confidence that she used to captivate millions during the global pandemic of 2020. While the world slowed down, Elsa sped up posting short, sarcastic monologues filmed from her bedroom.

What started as viral clips on Twitter and Instagram soon attracted attention from the likes of Rihanna, Chrissy Teigen, Anderson Cooper, and Beyoncé's BeyGOOD foundation, which awarded her for her impact in entertainment. She became a global ambassador for Fenty, graced covers of international magazines like Teen Vogue and GQ South Africa, and inked partnerships with major brands, including MAC Cosmetics and Valentino.

Beyond the laughter and sunglasses, Elsa is part of a new generation of African creatives rewriting the rules unfiltered, unapologetic, and unwilling to conform to Western expectations. She has often spoken openly about colorism, mental health, and the difficulty of navigating fame as a young, dark-skinned African woman. Her decision to relocate to the United States, in part due to backlash and trolling in Kenya, was a reminder that even laughter comes at a cost. But rather than dim her light, it sharpened her purpose.

In recent years, Elsa has expanded beyond comedy. She's become a voice in fashion and media, bringing her bold personality to panels, interviews, and brand campaigns. In 2021, she launched her illustrated book, The Alphabet for Kids and Adults.



Elsa Majimbo isn't just a comedian. She's a movement. She has built a brand without compromise and claimed a global stage without seeking validation.

> ***She's proof that in a world hungry for realness, authenticity will always win.***



From SA to the Spotlight:

TREVOR NOAH'S SATIRICAL REIGN

By Adebola Titilola

In 2015, Trevor Noah took over The Daily Show from Jon Stewart and people were skeptical that a mixed South African could deliver the political comedy just as well. Fast forward to years into running the show, Noah did not only silence the skeptics but also reshaped the format, expanded its global lens, and redefined the boundaries of political satire. Today, Trevor Noah isn't just a comedian. He's a cultural commentator, a voice of the African diaspora, and one of the most recognized media personalities in the world.

His rise in the South African comedy circuit was swift, but his leap into global fame was unmatched. The Daily Show became more than a nightly roast, it became a platform for unpacking global issues with nuance, humor, and humanity. Noah interviewed presidents, investigated dictatorships, and spotlighted social injustices with the balance of irony. His intelligent comedic style won him a legion of fans and critical acclaim, including a Primetime Emmy win and multiple nominations.

The Daily Show was named one of TIME Magazine's 100 Most Influential People, and earned multiple NAACP Image Awards. Aside from hosting, he's also a best-selling author and producer. After stepping down from The Daily Show in 2022, Noah continued to tour globally with his stand-up comedy, launched The Trevor Noah Podcast, and is developing film and television projects through his production company, Day Zero Productions.

From selling out shows worldwide to hosting the Grammy Awards, Noah put South Africa in the spotlight of Western spaces without compromise. Trevor Noah has become more than a media figure from South Africa, he became a mirror of resilience, identity, and global consciousness. Whether on stage, behind a mic, or in the director's chair, Trevor Noah continues to shape global conversations his own way.



PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA



THULI MADONSELA:

A champion invested in the pursuit of integrity

By Adebola Titilola

Madonsela held the title of South Africa's Public Protector from 2009 to 2016. Unlike some other public servers, she did not just hold a title, she held the trust of the nation and held it with fearless precision. Today, she remains one of Africa's most respected voices in law, human rights, and democratic accountability.

She was a former law professor and member of the team that helped draft South Africa's democratic constitution, Madonsela was never a stranger to high-stakes governance. Her 2014 report on the misappropriation of state funds to upgrade then President Jacob Zuma's private residence, titled "Secure in Comfort" was a masterclass in ethical courage. Her thorough investigation stood up to intense political analysis and it ultimately contributed to a landmark Constitutional Court ruling against Zuma.

Her commitment to justice has earned her numerous awards, including the German Africa Prize, Transparency International's Integrity Award, and honorary doctorates from several global institutions. In 2016, she was named Forbes Africa's Person of the Year and was also one of BBC's 100 Women. She has also being recognized by Time magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. Through research, policy influence, and community engagement, Madonsela continues to shape a future where justice is not a privilege but a shared right. Her legacy, still unfolding, is one of courage in office and clarity in purpose.

Thuli Madonsela's work transcends borders. She has emerged as a beacon of constitutionalism and integrity. She's now a law professor and Chair in Social Justice at Stellenbosch University, Madonsela continues her mission through academic work and advocacy. She champions equal access, social inclusion, and legal reform with the same zeal she once used to challenge state power. In every role she occupies, Thuli Madonsela remains a clear voice in this times.

Crossword Puzzle

Test your knowledge of West African culture, media, and icons. Fill in the puzzle and tag @WestAfricaOnPoint on Instagram with your completed crossword.



ACROSS

1. Capital city of Ghana
2. Popular Nigerian dish made with rice and stew
3. Afrobeat superstar known as "Big Wiz"
4. West African fabric known for bold patterns
5. South African genre trending in Nigeria
6. Legendary Afrobeat pioneer, Fela___
7. Popular reality TV show franchise in Africa
8. Iconic tree symbol found across Senegal
9. Major city and cultural hub in Ivory Coast
10. Capital City of Liberia?
4. Annual Lagos-based fashion and streetwear convention

DOWN

1. First name of Nigerian chef who broke a Guinness World Record
2. Ghanaian dance craze that went global
3. Pan-African business mogul and philanthropist
4. Ghanaian Afro-fusion singer of "Second Sermon"
5. Nigerian global music festival founded by Livespot
6. Spicy delicacy common in Liberia
7. Widely spoken language in Sierra Leone?



West Africa
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- Newspaper, Journal and Magazine Publication
- Media Relations and Crisis Management
- Influencer Marketing

2 EVENTS PR AND EVENTS COVERAGE

- (Events publicity, Red carpet host, event coverage)

3 ADVERTISEMENT & COMMERCIALS

- Photography and Videography
- Script writing, production and post production

4 PRODUCT AND BRAND PROMOTION

- Strategic promotion and Advertisement Ad placement



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THE PINNACLE

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This issue of The Pinnacle Magazine shines a light on "Discover the Rise of West Africa: A Spotlight on Innovation, Culture, and Leadership" Innovation in Tech and Business, Women of Impact, Leadership and Governance, Cultural Renaissance, Youth Empowerment, and Next-Gen Sustainability.