



Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa

CONNECT

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INTRODUCTION



Anjinsen Valamootoo

As we end the year, we breathe a sigh of relief and look through the last quarter of 2020 YALDA also continued to make an impact by hosting its first ever Pre i-Boot Camp Virtual Summit in collaboration with AfCFTA Secretariat, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the International Trade Centre (ITC). The Summit, themed 'Beyond COVID-19: Leveraging the Benefits of the AfCFTA to Spur Africa's Growth' was attended by over 900 delegates from across various African countries and the diaspora. It focused on how African youth can take advantage of the immense opportunities presented in the AfCFTA, beyond COVID-19, to grow and expand their businesses across the continent and thereby contribute to creating employment for themselves and their peers.

During the summit, several startups pitched their transformational business ideas. The winner of the USD 5,000 equity prize was Haile Wako Integrated Farm by Adugna Haile of Ethiopia. Haile Wako Integrated Farm is an agribusiness that produces climate smart seeds and distributes them to customers. Other businesses that pitched include Yonima Errands Runner from the Gambia, a logistics business that runs basic personal and business errands for clients; Awawo from Malawi, a manufacturer that uses natural plants, primarily bamboo to make eco-friendly products; and lastly, Rwandan startup Food-

line that produces, packages and delivers non-genetically modified foods (veggies) to their customers to promote healthier diets.

We will always face difficulties adapting to the changes that happen around us. Yet, it is often said that in every challenge, there is a lesson to learn and an opportunity to grab. This might be only a turning point in our life. Take this opportunity to adapt and improve and these transitions could be beneficial for Africa.

At YALDA we continue to be light bearers, standing on our feet and doing the needful in our respective communities.

"The evolution of humanity says that Africa reaffirms that she is continuing her rise from the ashes. Whatever the setbacks of the moment, nothing can stop us now! Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace!" – Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa, "I Am an African" speech delivered on 8 May 1996. back on the extraordinary achievements of YALDA in 2020 despite unprecedented and challenging times. 2020 was an unexpected year for the entire world. The COVID-19 pandemic, with the ensuing lockdown, global recession and government responses all over the world, has disrupted life as we know it in far-reaching ways. Many businesses have closed, meanwhile e-commerce has flourished. Remote work has become the new normal as several big companies will continue to have their employees work from home, probably till the end of 2021.

Africa's youth face additional challenges. Their education has been disrupted by lockdowns. A significant population of digitally unconnected youth are missing many months of school. Others have no means to productively engage in income-generating activities and continue to be plunged into despair and poverty.

And with youth comprising the majority of Africa's population, the developmental outcomes of Africa's young people is intricately linked with the continent's trajectory. If Africa's digital transformation is to succeed in responding to the challenges posed by COVID-19 and sustaining a long-term, inclusive recovery, we must invest in developing digital skills and creating employment opportunities for the youth. Aya Chebbi, the African Union Youth Envoy, envisions such a goal with her '1 Million by 2021 Initiative', which proposes direct opportunities for one million young Africans in the areas of education, employment, entrepreneurship and engagement (4Es).



KEY MILESTONES ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN 2020

By Raghda Medhat, Egypt

DEVELOPMENT



With over 75% of Africa's 1.2 billion inhabitants under the age of 35, and 453 million Africans aged 15-35, it goes without saying that developing Africa's youth has a significant and lasting effect on the continent's trajectory.

The African Union Commission, along with the rest of the world, recognizes the central role youth play in achieving the goals of Agenda 2063. In 2019, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the African Union Youth Envoy launched the '1 Million by 2021 Initiative', aimed at creating direct opportunities for one million young Africans in the areas of education, employment, entrepreneurship and engagement (4Es).

But in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted life around the world, causing socioeconomic repercussions in far-reaching ways. Africa's youth, in addition to being

Africa is full of natural resources, but the growing population of young people are the untapped powerhouses of the continent, and when you invest in them, you will unleash their full potential.

susceptible to coronavirus alongside the rest of the population, are also vulnerable to the unintended consequences of mitigating the disease. Their education is interrupted. Lockdowns mean the significant population of digitally unconnected youth miss many months of school.

In response to the additional challenges posed by COVID-19, the ILO and ITU, with the support of the African Union, launched a programme with continental reach to enhance digital skills and create employment opportunities in Africa's digital economy. Now, more than ever, these efforts to invest in youth employment are crucial to accelerate Africa's digital transformation and ensure an inclusive and sustainable long-term recovery.

Early in 2020, 10 members of the Youth Action Movement (YAM) successfully advocated for the abolition of



fees that hindered young people's access to contraceptive and sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention services. As a result, there's been a significant reduction in the number of teenage pregnancies and STIs (including HIV). Consequently, more adolescents and youth are likely to stay longer in school, empowering them for a brighter future and creating resilient communities with gender equality.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation Africa Region (IPPFAR) in Nairobi, Kenya joins the rest of the world in marking the International Youth Day under the theme 'Youth Engagement for Global Action'. As an organization that places youth at the core of its activities, IPPFAR strives to ensure that young people have access to quality sexual reproductive health information and services through youth-friendly centers in the Member Association clinics across the continent.

Africa is full of natural resources, but the growing population of young people are the untapped powerhouses of the continent, and when you invest in them, you will unleash their full potential.





AND VALUE-ADDED PROCESSING FOR THE 'MADE IN AFRICA' LABEL

By Lilian Olivia Orero, Kenya



“Dreaming is good. But now your dream must be profitable. For example, you cannot find investors who will put funds in your project without them seeing the potential for profitability.”

– Olivier Madiba, founder of Kiro'o Games in Cameroon

Industries in Africa could double their production to close to one trillion within just a decade. Majority of that growth is likely to come from manufacturing to substitute imports and meet the rapidly growing manufactured exports, thus making Africa the world's next great manufacturing center as industries shift away from developed countries such as China to lower-cost regions.

Africa has long been known for its resource abundance in both agriculture and mineral resources. Despite this, the continent has struggled to translate these resources into shared wealth and sustained economic development. New innovations and investments promise to change that scenario and create exciting growth opportunities for business. For instance, in oil and gas, Africa is

rich in unexplored, high-potential regions, and the continent has huge unmet demand for energy. It is estimated that the domestic gas market in Africa will grow by 9% a year to 2025, by which time the continent could use up to 70 percent of its own gas.

African companies, however, are still grappling with the problem of finding value-added processing for the 'Made in Africa' label, mainly because most finished products are considered poor quality and thus attract a limited number of buyers. Many vendors across Africa make similar products of lower quality. This situation reduces the market worth of those products.

Another challenge is that since extractive industries are capital intensive, they provide few opportunities for employment or skills development. Additionally, extractive industries tend to require smaller supplier chains than the manufacturing sector, which implies that technological externalities are lower and incentives for investment in supplier industries are weaker.



Still, African companies are finding solutions to local problems by innovating products that add value in processing for the 'Made in Africa' label. For instance, in Kenya, companies such as Twiga Foods, Copia Global and Kobo360 are employing digital solutions to streamline logistics.

Innovation has enabled Kenyan vendors to secure fresh produce. Nigerians can now access WiFi through solar powered towers. Innovative products such as MPost convert mobile phones into virtual mailboxes, while mPedigree uses SMS to spot out counterfeit medications. From such products, we see solutions to global problems.

As best practices from developed countries such as US, Australia, Norway and Scotland show, innovation is propelled by resource abundance. These countries have put in place right policies and conditions for their commodity production. African countries will therefore benefit more from innovation once they increase technology and crucial manufacturing and service activities that will lead to value added for the 'Made in Africa' label.

1. This online Kenyan marketplace, which helps urban shopkeepers source produce from small-scale Kenyan farmers, has been expanding its platform to

encompass non-perishable goods, developing its delivery capabilities and building out a fintech product that offers vendors credit to build out the have difficulty accessing shopping sites, this e-commerce platform uses a network of 5,000 community-based agents who earn commissions by placing orders on behalf of customers and serving as delivery point people for them. The company has honed its logistics network so that most customers receive their delivery (which is free when using an agent) within two days.

3. This digital platform facilitates freight logistics services by connecting truck drivers and fleet operators with companies that need their goods moved. The Nigerian-based company, which has expanded into Kenya, Uganda, Togo and Ghana, pays drivers directly to their bank accounts, eliminating the need for cash transactions and putting all the paperwork online.

4. This Nigerian startup, which is known for providing public Wi-Fi hotspots in urban areas, has been rolling out a high-speed network across the country using solar-powered towers. It is now replicating the model in Ghana and has plans to bring its services to more West African countries.



5. Rather than pay for a fixed PO Box, MPost allows users to quickly convert their phone numbers into a virtual mailbox at their closest post office. Launched at the end of 2019, the service alerts users when mail arrives, which they can either pick up or have delivered.

6. mPedigree has developed an elegant solution to the problem of counterfeit goods: it embeds a unique code into a product label, which shoppers can text to the manufacturer to verify the item's authenticity. The startup, which now operates in a dozen countries, works with some of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies to spot out counterfeit medicines. It also brings traceability to seeds and other agricultural products within Africa.

As manufacturing and industrial output remain the drivers of economic growth, the need for African economies to give more attention to value-added processing cannot be over stated. All African countries need to do is to produce a variety of 'Made in Africa' brands ranging from foodstuffs to automobiles. It is to be noted, however, that African exports often face excessively strict standards to enter global markets. Chances are these high-quality, value-added products will only go as far as their national and perhaps regional boundaries will take them.

African countries should focus on promoting local value chains which incentivize local artisans to specialize in making high-end products. Those products can then be aggressively marketed by African countries as part of their branding strategy. The classical experience of many resource-rich countries shows that commodity sectors foster productivity growth, technological innovation, forward and backward linkages, provided they are supported by good institutions and investment in human capital and knowledge. For example, in Sweden and Finland, the development of sophisticated processing industries was mainly the result of investments in skills and research from public and private institutions.

Compared to Africa, various countries in Asia and Latin America have been successful in being able to develop backward and forward linkages to the commodity sector through a complex mix of resource endowment, policy making, socio-economic and country-specific political characteristics. Africa needs to borrow the methods and apply them, for they may be beneficial in its path towards commodities-based industrialisation.

Africa still has a long way to go in terms of innovation and the value of their commodities to consumers. Half-baked technological systems and industries, when compared to other continents, appear to be subpar. However, there is continual effort by manufacturing and technology industries to do their level best to produce commodities that benefit the community around them and the outside world at large.



YALDA VIRTUAL PRE I-BOOT CAMP HIGHLIGHTS

By Chuks Okoriekwe, Nigeria

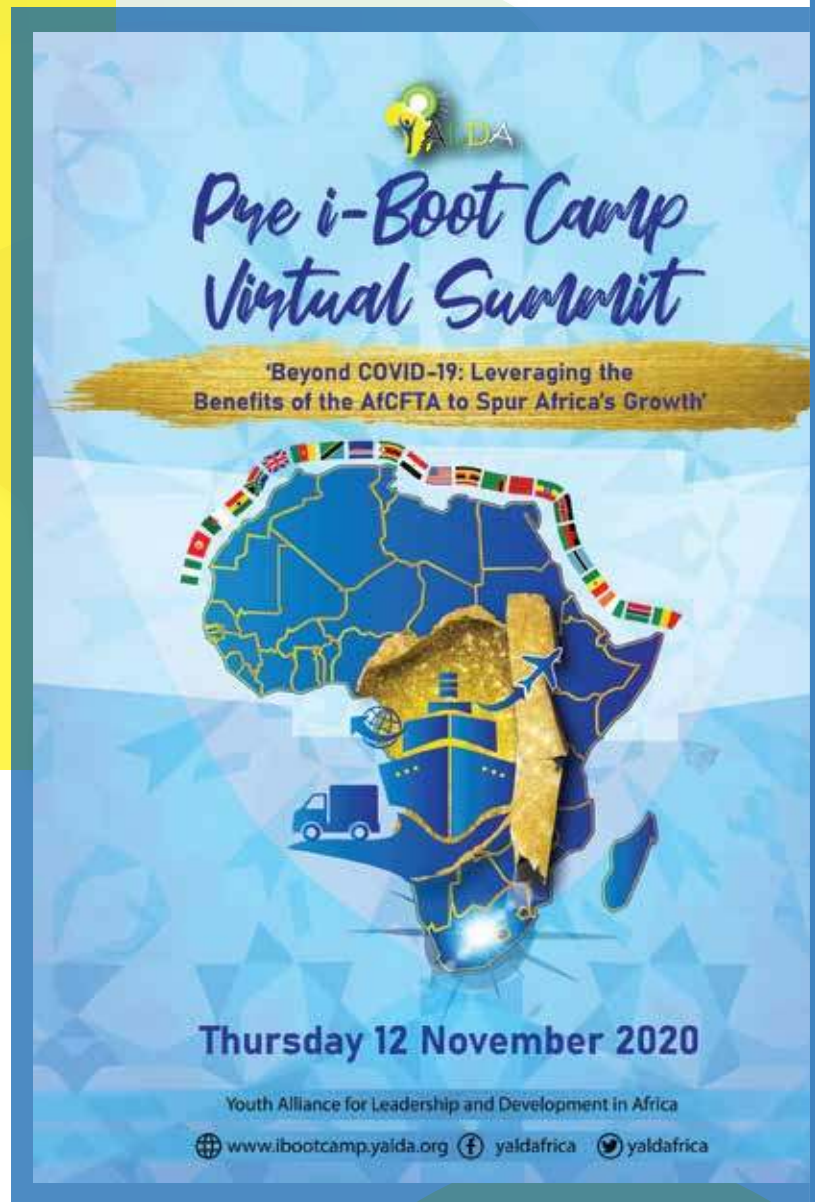
Johannesburg:

On 12 November 2020, the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), International Trade Centre (ITC) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat organised a global Pre i-Boot Camp Virtual Summit on the theme 'Beyond COVID-19: Leveraging the Benefits of the AfCFTA to Spur Africa's Growth.'

The summit brought together more than 900 young people, industry leaders and entrepreneurs on Zoom and YALDA's Facebook page for a series of webinars and workshops, creating a knowledge sharing platform to develop strategies around how young people can overcome the impact of COVID-19 and revitalise Africa's growth. The session also educated young people on the AfCFTA and how to leverage it in order to thrive in this 'new normal.'

Objectives of the Summit

- Provide a platform for young people to engage digitally with industry and business leaders in order to share strategies around how young people can respond to COVID-19
- Help young people adapt to the changing work environments and incorporate these methods into their business strategies, so they can capitalise on opportunities that will arise in the digital environment post COVID-19
- Address information asymmetry and other challenges youth entrepreneurs face with trade and investment in Africa and the AfCFTA
- Assist young people to utilise trade agreements to expand their enterprises beyond their borders, thereby deepening intra-Africa trade and creating more avenues for employment
- Legitimise the position that YALDA holds as the representative African youth-led organisation on the continent capable of bridging the divide between industry players and young people across the trade platforms (i.e., business, government and multilateral institutions) thus deepening participation by young people.





Sessions, Speakers and Impact

Throughout the Summit, panellists highlighted the important role of young people on the continent have to play in implementing the AfCFTA while reiterating how the trade agreement can position the continent for optimal growth. In the words of the Honourable Minister of Youth and Sport, Chad H.E Routouang Mohamed Ndonga Christian, “Youth should take ownership, not only seize the opportunity to find jobs beyond their borders but also do business in other countries making use of their talent.”



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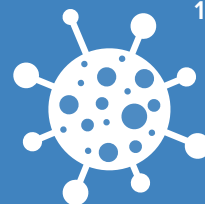


As it is customary for YALDA to invest in budding enterprises in Africa, a business pitch competition was organised to showcase amazing youth-led businesses in Africa. Haile Wako Integrated Farm from Ethiopia was awarded the \$5,000 investment prize for its future prospects for business growth and fulfilling the intra-African trade perspective of the Summit. Foodline (Rwanda), Awawo (Malawi) and Yonima Errands Runner (Gambia) were among the other finalists.



The findings reached at the Summit included three key lessons:

1. The participation of youth in the implementation of the AfCFTA is essential to its success
2. Strengthening the continent's digital infrastructure through investment in technology will boost digital trade while also putting in place policies to address inclusion in the digital space
3. Micro, small and medium enterprises are the bedrock of the continent's economy and must have access to financial resources to unlock the continent's growth trajectory through the AfCFTA.



VIRTUAL PRE I-BOOT CAMP FEATURED KEYNOTE: THE AFCFTA IN AFRICA'S COVID-19 RESPONSE, BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. WAMKELE MENE (SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE AFCFTA)



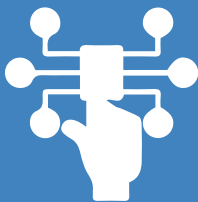
**By Grant Davis, eSwatini /
South Africa**

YALDA hosted its virtual edition of the biennial i-Boot camp, jointly organised with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) under the theme, 'Beyond COVID-19: Leveraging the Benefits of the AfCFTA to Spur Africa's Growth.' At the summit, YALDA had the privilege of hosting His Excellency Mr Wamkele Mene, the Secretary-General of the AfCFTA Secretariat. Prior to H.E. Mene's election as the Secretary-General, on 10 February 2019 at the 33rd African Union Summit, he served as South Africa's Chief Negotiator for the AfCFTA and Tripartite FTA negotiations. H. E Wamkele Mene has extensive experience in international trade law and international investment law and served as South Africa's representative to the World Trade Organization from 2010-2015. During his tenure at WTO, H.E. Mene was elected by over 130 governments to the position of Chairman of the Committee on International Trade in Financial Services, a group comprising trade negotiators, financial regulators and financial policy makers from over 160 countries. Prior to joining government service, H.E. Mene worked for law firms in London and Hong Kong. He has also written and lectured internationally on trade, international investment law and international business law. He holds two Master's degrees from the University of London's School of African and Oriental Studies and the London School of Economics.

H.E. Wamkele Mene, in his speech – delivered on his behalf by Mr Tei Kitcher, Head of Policy and Research, Trade in Goods Directorate – reflected on the importance of youth involvement in cross-border trade.: He reminded the audience that youth represent the future of society and its economy. "This is especially relevant in Africa, where almost 60% of the population is under age 25. Also, 19 of the world's youngest countries are in Africa. The social and economic development of the youth in Africa is therefore crucial for the future of the continent. Intra- and inter-trade strengths are still limited in youth entrepreneurship in Africa. Undoubtedly, Africa continues to face a wider range of problems that constraint their capacity to participate and benefit in international trade. Youth-specific barriers in cross-border trading include lack of access in finances, limited access to trade/market related information, limited trade education and skills, administration and regulative framework that do not favour young people."

With this in mind, H.E. Mene's speech also touched on the need to spread awareness of the AfCFTA agreement and how its reforms translate into opportunities that encourage young people to test their entrepreneurship ideas and skills. In his view, implementing the AfCFTA will promote more labour-intensive trade and as a result create more employment opportunities on the continent. As H.E. Mene put it, "This is the time to change the narratives and harness the skills and talents of the youth to achieve Africa's sustainable development. It is time to make efforts to assist the youth to participate in regional and global value chains across border trades."

He stated that the AfCFTA is also expected to create jobs for Africa's youthful population. "Extractive industries and its exports, on which Africa currently relies, is less labour intensive. The AfCFTA will venture into manufacturing, which will make use of more machines and more labour, thereby creating more jobs. However, for the youth to benefit from this agreement, it is imperative to emphasise on formal education. Education is one of the powerful tools in the fight against extreme poverty, particularly for girls who are affected the hardest. Again, for the successful implementation of the AfCFTA, there is the need to create more awareness on the opportunities it seeks to present."



Virtual Pre i-Boot Camp Featured Speakers

By Grant Davis, eSwatini/South Africa



Jean-Paul Adam

Jean-Paul Adam is the Director for Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resources Management in the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Prior to taking on this role, he served in the Government of the Republic of Seychelles in several Cabinet positions. Jean-Paul Adam, as a member of the panel on Growing the Digital Infrastructure in Africa for Effective Implementation of the AfCFTA Beyond Covid-19, reflected on the importance of investing in digital infrastructure and on the significant opportunities the AfCFTA presents to increase the economic contribution of e-commerce on the continent. He advocated that private sector support to bridge the cost of investing in digital infrastructure requires an enabling regulatory framework.

Anna Ekeledo

Anna Ekeledo is the Executive Director of AfriLabs - a network organization of 240 technology innovation hubs spread across 48 African Countries. She leads AfriLabs in its quest to develop programmes and build partnerships that support African Innovation Hubs and other stakeholders to raise high potential entrepreneurs that stimulate economic growth and social development in Africa. Anna advocated that broadband connectivity should be seen as an essential service by governments and therefore its investment prioritised. In her view, internet connectivity in Africa is hampered by high costs and that the government should build a national data framework and harmonise e-governance to enable innovation, improve efficiency, transparency, accountability and information.



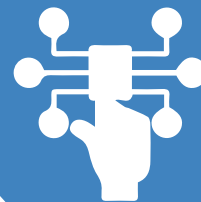
Mohamed Elkafafy

Mohamad Kafafy is the founder and CEO of Agrona, a waste recycling company in Egypt. Mohamad has more than 12 years of experience in managing manufacturing projects. Mohamed in his address on the panel, Resuscitating African Supply Chain: Positioning youth-run businesses to leverage the AfCFTA for trade development spoke about the lack of diversification in Africa's economies and how it exacerbated the impact that COVID-19 had. He spoke about the need for governments on the continent to invest in building capacity within localised supply-chains. Some recommendations made include: unifying origin rule of products, having a unified payment system among others would support the trading process and help young people to take advantage of the opportunities that the AfCFTA can bring.

Claire Baker

Claire Baker is the Head of the Africa Digital Media Foundation. While Claire is half French and half English by heritage, she is fully Nairobiian by choice, and has been in Kenya long enough to feel right at home in the city. In her comments during the panel entitled, Innovative Funding Measures for Your Business during the Pandemic and Beyond, she spoke about the challenging environment to obtain funding for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and how COVID19 brings unique opportunities for entrepreneurs and SMEs to explore. She advised that SMEs should look at realigning the way they deliver value in line with the current factors at play in order to form innovative partnerships and collaborations that address the needs and direction of possible funders. Claire also spoke about the need for young entrepreneurs to use this opportunity to focus on capacity building and leverage support governments are currently providing under existing COVID19 relief.





Virtual Pre i-Boot Camp Featured Delegates

By Mohammed Kerkulah, Liberia

Out of over 900 attendees from the virtual summit, we are extremely pleased to feature three delegates who participated throughout the event, asking questions, networking and interacting continuously: Selma Bichbich from Algeria, Brian Malika from Kenya, and Dumisani Mkhize from South Africa.

These exceptional Pre i-Boot Camp delegates share a few words about themselves, as they seek to inspire fellow Africans with their vision for youth and the continent.



“I am Selma Bichbich, a student of English from Algeria. I am a volunteer work lover and social activist who has been always working for the improvement of communities by including my ideas and implementing projects that serve the SDGs in order to have a better sustainable future where youth are the real ChangeMakers. My vision for youth and Africa is to see youth fulfilling their dreams of helping and changing their countries by working on providing Education, Employment, Healthcare, and opportunities to be better than before.”



“I am Brian Malika, a social worker from Kenya. I have great passion for young Africans who have disabilities, and as a result, I am offering employment solutions that create accommodative, fair, and equal work settings for African youth who are entering the employment workspace. To enhance this, I founded a not-for-profit grassroots organization called One More Percent, which champions for Inclusive Disability Employment. My vision for youth and Africa is that African youth should flourish to the highest level they can on the African continent.”



“I am Dumisani Mkhize, a law student from South Africa. I am a political activist, avid reader, photographer and content producer for Vow FM (COVID report show) at the University of Wits in Johannesburg. I am also a commanding team member of Ward 13 and a proud member of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). My vision for youth and Africa is that they are able to achieve beyond their fondest of dreams as they invest in each other and do away with racism, which still reigns supreme, for being Black in Africa appears to be a crime to others within our societies.”



VIRTUAL PRE I-BOOT CAMP FEATURED ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES

By Moses Akurugu Ade-ena and YALDA Ghana team

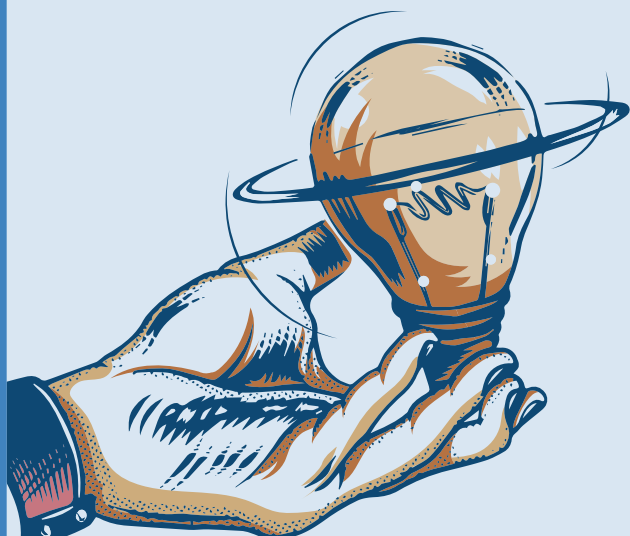
Below are highlights of the youth startups and entrepreneurial ventures that were featured during the pitch session at the Pre i-Boot Camp 2020.



Jariatou Jallow, CEO

Yonima, meaning “Send Me”, is an errands and logistics business that provides services to businesses and individuals. Their tagline, “Yonima! Because You’ve Got Better Things To Do,” embodies their mission to free our clients from the basic personal and business tasks that often pose competing demands and clog their schedule. Yonima’s Business Errands Service offers services such as business registration, bank account openings, administrative work, surveys and many more. The Personal Errands include child pickup, shopping deliveries and more.

YONIMA ERRANDS RUNNER





VIRTUAL PRE I-BOOT CAMP FEATURED ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES

By Moses Akurugu Ade-ena and YALDA Ghana team

AWAWO



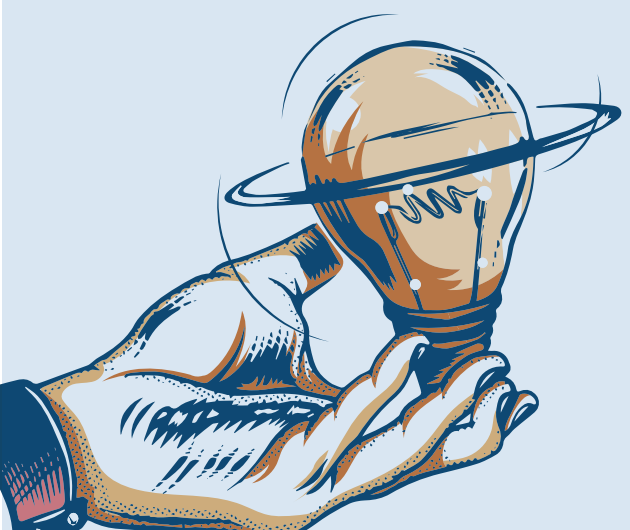
Joanne Chigwenembe Co-Founder



Awawo is a proudly Malawian startup that uses natural plants, primarily bamboo, to make eco-friendly products such as straws, cutlery, lampshades, furniture and plantable notepads. Awawo recycles plastic waste into eco-bricks and jewellery. The 100% eco-friendly manufacturing and recycling startup from Lilongwe, Malawi was formed to offer sustainable alternatives to single-use plastics right at the root of the problem - Production. The growing pollution in Lake Malawi gave Awawo the need to adopt plastic recycling and make sustainable alternatives available to help reduce plastic waste.



Precious Di Phiri, CEO & Co-Founder





VIRTUAL PRE I-BOOT CAMP FEATURED ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES

By Moses Akurugu Ade-ena and YALDA Ghana team

FOODLINE



Eric Ishimwe

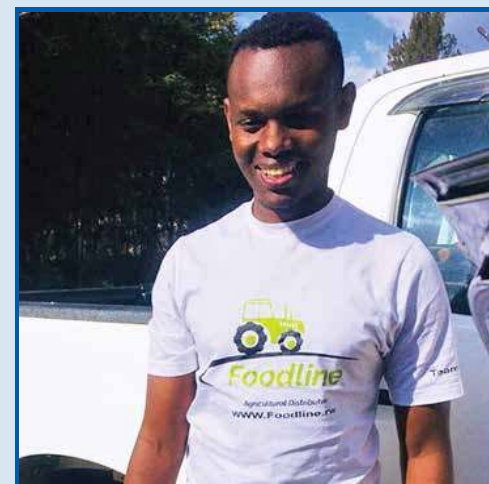


Emmy Muguna



Gilbert Ngororano

Foodline is a Rwandan startup that seeks to reduce GMO market share. They produce, package and deliver non-genetically modified vegetables to their customers to promote healthy living. This venture was established on the basis that 65% of Rwandans believe that genetically modified food is unhealthy, which gives the company a market niche to supply naturally produced veggies to their potential customers.

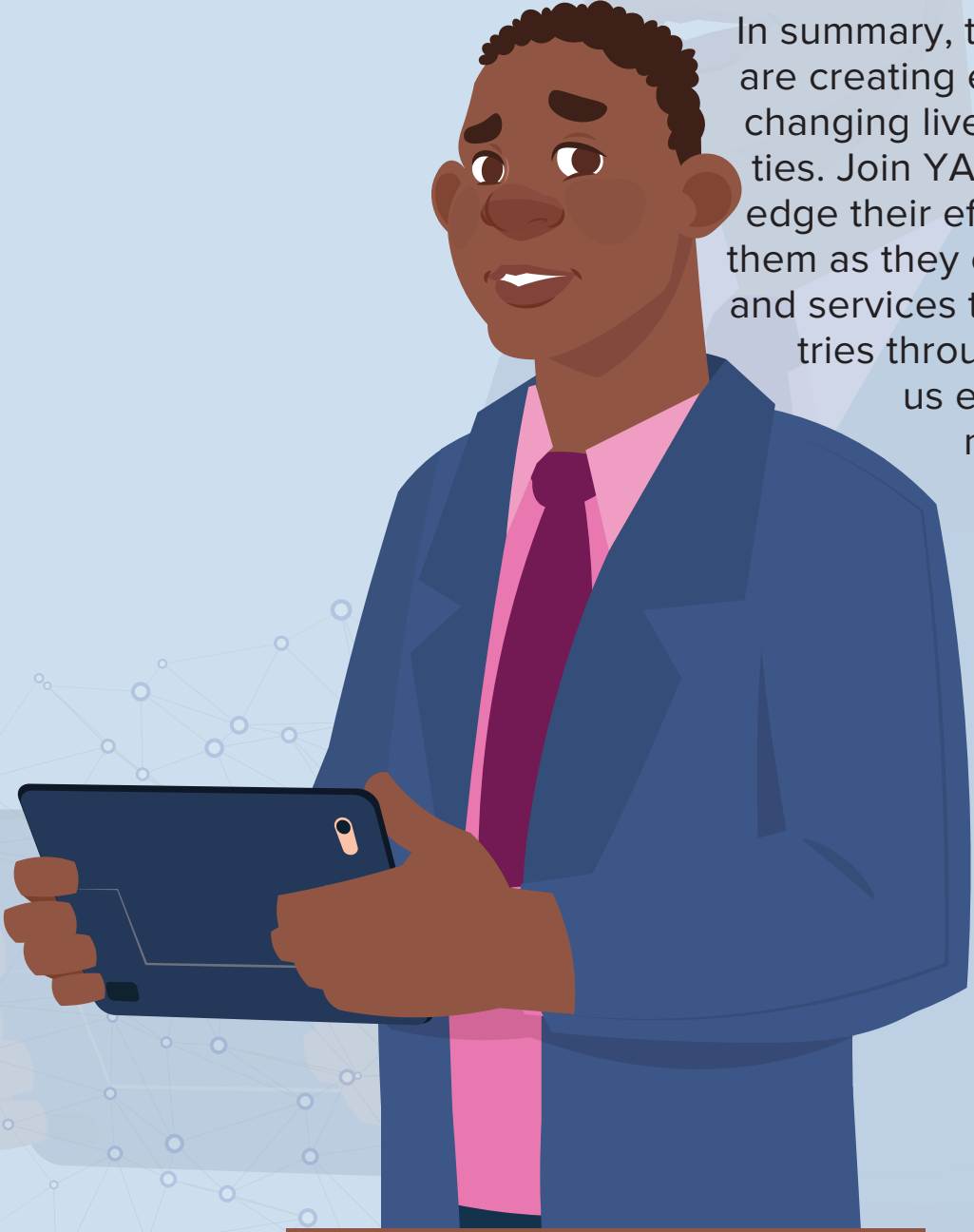




VIRTUAL PRE I-BOOT CAMP FEATURED ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES

By Moses Akurugu Ade-ena and YALDA Ghana team

CONCLUSION



In summary, these young people are creating employment and changing lives in their communities. Join YALDA as we acknowledge their efforts and support them as they expand their products and services to other African countries through the AfCFTA. Let us emulate their entrepreneurial spirit: innovate to solve our everyday problems and put our beloved continent on an accelerated path to development while creating viable jobs for African youth.



WINNER OF THE VIRTUAL PRE I-BOOT CAMP

By Jenni Jostock, Decent Jobs for Youth Blog Post, International Trade Centre

Adugna Haile Wako is the CEO and Founder of Adugna Haile Business Consulting Firm and the Deputy CEO and Co-founder of Haile Wako Integrated Farm. He is also a certified business consultant, economist, entrepreneur and innovator.

Adugna was the winner of the \$5,000 equity investment prize, which he was awarded during the pitching competition of the 2020 YALDA Pre i-Boot Camp Virtual Summit in November. The International Trade Centre's Youth and Trade Team and YALDA sat down with him to speak about all things surrounding the management of a sustainable youth business.



What sparked your idea to create Haile Wako Integrated Farm?

I was inspired to create an innovative agribusiness due to prevailing food and self-sufficiency challenges in Ethiopia. There is a huge gap between seeds demand and supply. The seeds supply accounts for less than 3% annually, compared to a much higher demand coming from farmers across Ethiopia. This seeds supply shortage highly contributes to persistent food insecurity and under-nourishment in the country. On average about 9 million people are suffering from food security challenges annually.

These facts initiated us to establish Haile Wako Integrated Farm in September 2016. The farm is certified in seeds production and supply for the

local market in Ethiopia. The agribusiness is registered on the UN Global Marketplace (UNGM) website, which has been linking seeds supply businesses with UN agencies like FAO since 2017.

The sister company Adugna Haile Business Consulting is currently operational and has signed a Non-Disclosure

Could you tell us about the key role of sustainability within your business model? How do you work to achieve this?

More than anything, it's crucial for us to create enabling conditions for our fellow citizens. We want to ensure sustainability by helping small-holder farmers via the out-grower scheme, and by creating opportunities for youth and women by expanding and diversifying the business to the next level.



Our sustainability philosophy is to benefit the current generation of farmers greatly, while not operating at the expense of future farmer generations. We have also developed an environmental policy, which is currently serving as a working document.

How does your business support the local community?

The agribusiness initiative is working with local farmers via the out-grower farmer scheme and via delivering technical assistance. We signed the out-grower contract agreement with 200 farmers to produce seeds. In addition, the farm now employs 20 youth on a permanent and 30 women on a casual basis. Farmers are selected for contract agreements based on their performance, good work ethics and the size of the farm area that they own.

What is your long-term vision for your business?

To diversify and to incorporate innovative business models into agro-processing activities like maize milling, tomato paste processing, feed processing and dairy processing plants. We also aim to employ even more women and youth in the future, as well as to expand our products beyond the local market and to eventually export processed foods.

How can international agencies suc

The UN and other international development agencies need to play a critical role by taking into account the needs of youth entrepreneurs in policy and implementation initiatives with national governments. I also think that UN agencies can do their part in designing specific programmes for youth and women to bring about positive economic changes for the lives of young entrepreneurs.

What advice do you have for aspiring young entrepreneurs?

Young entrepreneurs have a lot of untapped potential to convert problems into solutions through their drive and capabilities. I would advise all young entrepreneurs around the globe to have a vision, a great level of focus, high aspirations and to create new innovative business ideas. Test and scale-up prototypes, develop a clear action plan and put those ideas into reality!





CREATING A PERFECT PITCH FOR YOUR STARTUP

By Gape Nxumalo, South Africa

You may have found the perfect business idea, rallied up some support from your inner circle and made your first few sales. But, like most entrepreneurs, you have an innate desire to upscale your venture and grow your client-base. That's where the perfect start-up pitch comes in.

Pitching your business idea to an audience can be scary, but knowing what to say and how to say it could relieve some of your presentation anxieties. Regardless of how much profit-potential your business may have, your pitch needs to get the right people to see it that way.



Here are our top 3 tips for creating the perfect pitch for your start-up.

Keep It Simple

It is easy to get derailed when you speak about something you are passionate about, such as your business. Therefore, structuring your presentation is essential. Invite the audience to note questions, if any, and ask them at the end. This will help you get your points across without accidentally going off on a tangent.

When creating your pitch, try to answer these questions:

- 1** What is your overall idea, and what problem is it solving?
- 2** What is your unique selling point?
- 3** Who is your target market, and how will you reach them if you haven't already?
- 4** How much investment do you need?
- 5** What are the projected costs and profits for the first year?
- 6** Is your business able to sustain itself post-investment?
- 7** How will their investment benefit their reputation and/or finances?



These questions should help guide your presentation in the right direction.



UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE



IMPROVE YOUR PUBLIC SPEAKING

Before you approach anyone, you need to know exactly who you are talking to. Try to find out as much as possible about everyone you will be presenting to. Just like you would need to adjust your CV according to the role and company you're applying to, the same should be done for your pitch. Adding contextual examples about their interests could really drive it home for you.

Doing your homework is also important in determining the right person to pitch your ideas to. For instance, if your business is primarily in the beauty and hygiene sector, a potential investor wouldn't be someone in the mining industry.

TELL A STORY

If you have ever watched the popular television series Shark Tank (or Dragon's Den in some regions), you know how colourful a business pitch can be. Your potential investor likely sits through several meetings a day. So, how will you make yourself memorable?

Rather than packing your pitch with loads of information about your business alone, tell your personal story and why your brand is worth their time.

Sure, you might email them after the pitch with a detailed document they can review later. However, they might open it after a week or more, and if your pitch was boring, they are less likely to view it at all.



WEBINAR HIGHLIGHTS

By Abinaidah Chaseba, Zambia and Bethelhem Jambo Kassa, Ethiopia

SEPTEMBER WEBINAR

Online Moderator Workshop

It is no news that the COVID-19 pandemic has moved almost every activity and event online. So, in its continued partnership with the World Bank Group and Youth Transforming Africa, YALDA co-hosted a webinar to educate young people on the do's and don'ts of online moderation, as it has become a vital skill in these times. The panel of seasoned moderators delivered various tips on how to handle online moderation, including the components of a good webinar (structure) and the best ways to: introduce speakers, keep a young audience engaged, moderate a high-level formal webinar, manage Question & Answer sessions and conclude an event.



Musopa Kalenga

Blog4Dev Winner
2019, Zambia
Co-Host



Budani Bulayani

Country Secretary,
YALDA Botswana
Co-Host



Maura K. Leary

Acting Manager, World
Bank's External Affairs Team
SPEAKER



Noreyana Fernando

External Affairs Officer, World Bank's
International and Multilateral Affairs
SPEAKER



Dimpho Lekgeu

Blog4Dev Winner
SPEAKER



Phatsimo Mosimanegape

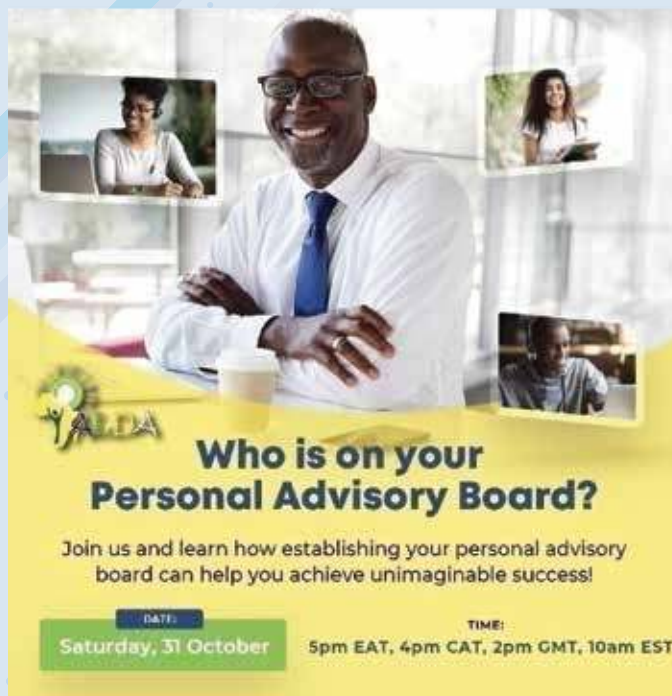
Country Chairperson,
YALDA Botswana
SPEAKER



OCTOBER WEBINAR

Personal Advisory Board

One cannot depend on just anyone for advice. No business person or professional can succeed without the right kind of support. Knowing who to go to for advice and how to keep them in your network enables smart decisions in business, careers or personal lives. The October webinar brought together a panel of influential professionals from all walks of life to share insights on how to develop a personal advisory board. The speakers emphasised the power of mentorship and explained why it is vital for mentors to first assess the needs of their mentees. They further established that young people need to seek mentors with supplementary strengths and experiences – such as influential people in areas they are interested in – and offered advice on how to approach them.



Sabir Boumehti

YALDA Publicity Team
Communication Team
MODERATOR



Nicolatte Natuku

Founder, Walking
The African Journey
SPEAKER



Kojo Parris

Chairman,
KBA Africa
SPEAKER



Dr. Meldia Harris Barrow

CEO of Love, Truth and Peace
Global Initiative, Panama
SPEAKER



Dr. Ayou Boukhatam

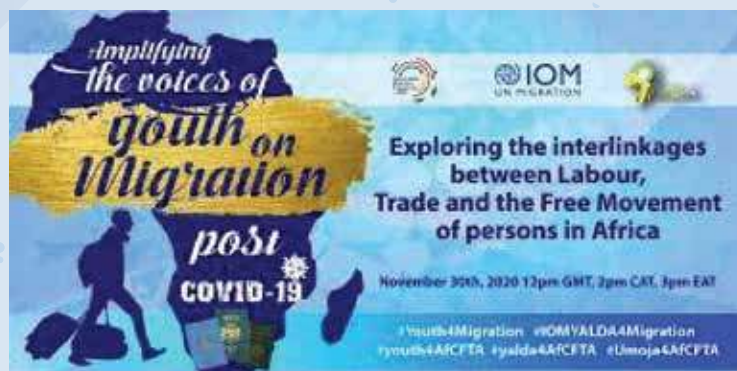
Founder and CEO, Almaahad Pro
International Company
SPEAKER



NOVEMBER WEBINAR

Exploring the Interlinkages between Trade, Labour and Free Movement of Persons

YALDA partnered with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to hold a webinar to illustrate the interlinkages of the AfCFTA, the free movement of persons protocol and the existing labour migration programmes on the continent. The online seminar noted that the AfCFTA will provide a stable and larger market for young Africans to capitalise on and create formal businesses, while the Free Movement Protocol (FMP) can address skill shortages by allowing individuals to lead and work where their talents are most needed and applicable. The webinar explored these interlinkages in the context of migration, bringing to light participatory engagements and key messaging on youth and migration in Africa.



Mathabo Mohwaduba

Fellow - African Young Women Leaders Fellowship, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa

SPEAKER



Kudakwashe Chingono

Fellow – African Young Women Leaders Fellowship, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa

SPEAKER



Nicholas Ouma

Senior Youth Advisor – African Union Youth Division, Department of Human Resource Science & Technology

SPEAKER



Dr. Ahmed Burge

African Union Commission Department of Social Affairs

SPEAKER



Rita Amuthobu

SPEAKER



Ron Osman Omar

African Union Commission Department of Trade and Industry

SPEAKER



Chuks Okoriekwe

President, YALDA Nigeria

MODERATOR



Jemima Idinoba

Research Officer International Organization for Migration

MODERATOR



STATEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

By Abinaidah Chaseba, Zambia

OCTOBER

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October)



Theme: "Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all"

#YALDA4EndPoverty
#EndPoverty
#30daysforEcoSocialJustice

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is observed on 17 October every year to highlight a global commitment to eliminate poverty in all its forms. The 2020 theme, "Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all", was a call for everyone to be aware of individual and communal efforts that improve quality of life and nurture the environment. YALDA remains committed to encouraging young African leaders to be a resource for change in society and play an active role in eliminating poverty in all its forms to preserve Africa's economic security.



INTERNATIONAL DAY of the ERADICATION of POVERTY
OCTOBER 17, 2020

Theme: "Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all"

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is observed to highlight a global commitment to the eradication of poverty in all its forms. To ensure celebrations were held in Africa, YALDA, at the 17th October 2020, will mark the first steps of a protected and renewed effort to achieve the very first United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG #1) which aims to "Eradicate poverty in all its forms everywhere".

The 2020 theme "Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all" is a call for all to recognize that social and environmental justice are inseparable and that the environment is a pillar of accountability and a realization that a protected and nurtured environment is the foundation for a flourishing society. Despite the remarkable gains made in the long run, we have witnessed growing gaps in the global growth and development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to "achieve the sustainable development goals by focusing on the most vulnerable groups such as young girls, migrants, refugees, and persons and indigenous populations".

As the global as the global environmental situation continues to deteriorate, the lack of urgency and basic monitoring and reporting systems to our climate commitment is moving humanity towards a more socially just and damaged world. According to the World Bank, 60% of the world's population live on less than \$2.00 a day. 1.2 billion people live on less than \$1.25 a day. 800 million people live below the global poverty line representing more than 60% of the world's population. The world has made significant progress in reducing poverty and in many cases, more than 1 billion people have been lifted out of poverty. However, the progress is unevenly distributed across the globe and the pace of progress is slow. The world is still far from achieving the goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Right? End on people are not yet free from poverty. The situation is still dire and the world is still far from achieving the goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere. The world is still far from achieving the goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere. The world is still far from achieving the goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere.

In 2020, the urgency of the actions towards social and environmental justice has never been more apparent. The 2020 theme "Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all" is a call for everyone to be aware of individual and communal efforts that improve quality of life and nurture the environment. YALDA remains committed to encouraging young African leaders to be a resource for change in society and play an active role in eliminating poverty in all its forms to preserve Africa's economic security.

WHAT ACTION WILL YOU TAKE?

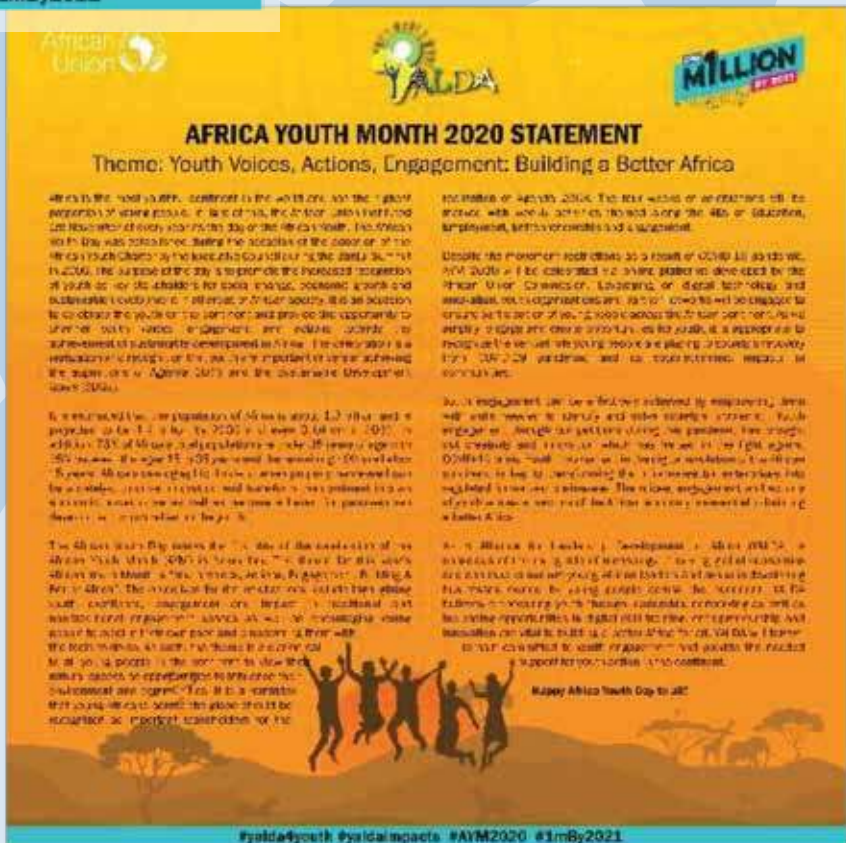


NOVEMBER

Africa Youth Month (1 November)



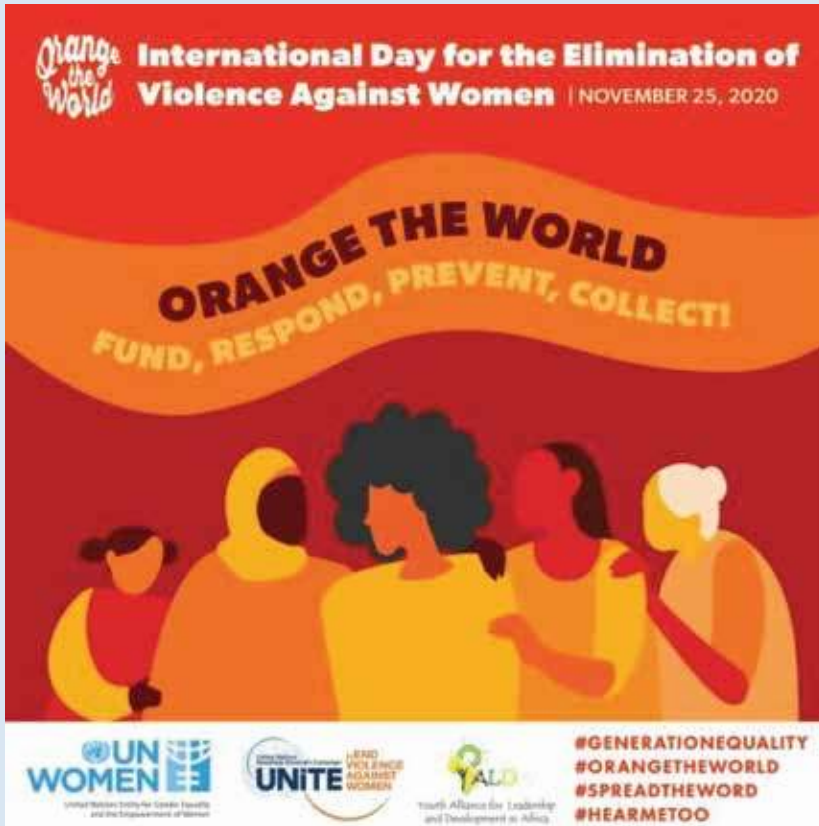
The African Union established 1 November as the day of the African Youth and the month of November as Africa Youth Month. Africa is the most youthful continent in the world, having the highest proportion of young people. During November, we promote social change, economic growth and sustainable development in all areas of African society. The 2020 theme was 'Youth Voices, Actions, Engagement: Building a Better Africa'. The Africa Youth Day and Month are occasions to celebrate the youth of the continent and provide the opportunity to channel their voices, vision and ideas towards the achievement of sustainable development in Africa.





NOVEMBER

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November)



Gender-Based Violence is a global health concern that disproportionately threatens the wellbeing of women and girls. The 16-day international campaign calling for an end to the grave injustices and violence suffered by women globally commences annually on 25 November and culminates on Human Rights Day (10 December). The theme for this year's campaign is 'Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent and Collect'. The purpose is to mobilise individuals, institutions and organizations around the world in order to collectively use available resources to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women.



International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
NOVEMBER 25, 2020

Theme: Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global health concern that threatens the wellbeing of women and girls. GBV is defined as any harmful act directed against women and girls on the basis of their gender. It includes physical, sexual, psychological, economic, and social violence, such as intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and forced marriage. It is a leading cause of death and disability for women and girls worldwide.

The theme for this year's campaign is 'Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect'. This campaign aims to mobilize individuals, institutions, and organizations around the world to collectively use available resources to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women.

The purpose of the campaign is to mobilize individuals, institutions and organizations around the world in order to collectively use available resources to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women.

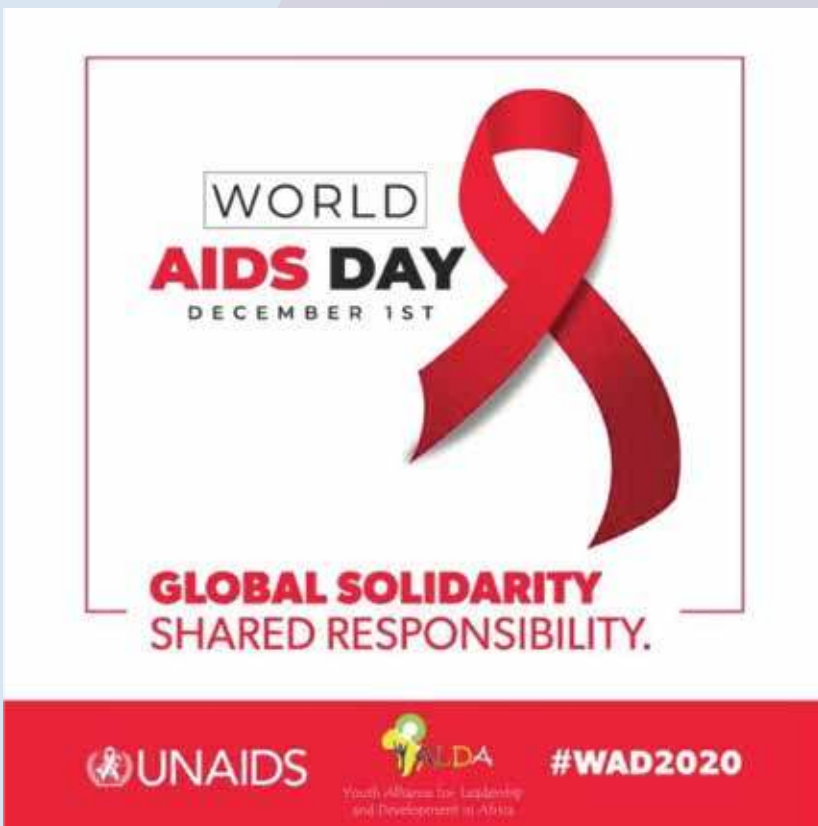
Wear Orange TODAY and STAND for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls

UN WOMEN **YALDA** **#GENERATIONEQUALITY #ORANGETHEWORLD #SPREADTHEWORD #HEARMETOO**



December

World AIDS Day (1 December)



The World AIDS Day, which was instituted in 1988 was the first international day for global health and is commemorated by the United Nations Agencies, Governments and Civil Society Organizations worldwide. This year's theme, 'Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility', is a reminder that there is still critical need to increase awareness of the impact of HIV on people's lives, to end stigma and discrimination and to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV. On this day, people wear red ribbons as a universal symbol of awareness and solidarity with people living with HIV and AIDS.



WORLD AIDS DAY

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY. December 1st, 2020

announced in 1988, World AIDS Day was the first international day for global health. People around the world gather in order to show support for people living with HIV and to remember those who have lost their lives due to AIDS-related illnesses. Commemoration of this day is a declaration that HIV has not gone away. There is still critical need to increase awareness of the impact of HIV on people's lives, to end stigma and discrimination and to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV. This day is also an opportunity for different stakeholders to play their part in raising awareness and advocating for people living with HIV. On this day, people wear a red ribbon as a universal symbol of awareness and support for solidarity with people living with HIV and AIDS.

World AIDS Day is commemorated every year on the 1st of December, where United Nations Agencies, governments and civil societies join hands to raise awareness on specific issues related to HIV.

This year's major theme of the world's health and attention has been shifted to the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative that COVID-19 that makes significant progress that the world has made in its health and development sector over the past 20 years, including the gains made against HIV, should not be lost. COVID-19 is not the year's theme is 'Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility'. COVID-19 has a potential with other critical issues such as human rights, gender equality, social protection and economic growth. COVID-19 has a potential to reverse the gains made in the past 20 years, leaving other people behind a stark reality, putting people at the heart of actions we are taking to end both these pandemics. As people around the world we need to join to put the epidemic of HIV & COVID-19.

UNAIDS statistics indicate that 1.7 million people were newly infected with HIV in 2019 because of lack of access to medicines and essential services, while 38 million people were living with HIV and 690,000 people died of AIDS-related illnesses. There have been 68% new infections in Western and Central Africa, 38% new infections in eastern and southern Africa and 57% new infections in the Middle East and North Africa. There is very high number of

most cases stigma and discrimination, social inequities and exclusion are hindering the steps to reducing HIV-related issues. We need to have programs and strategies that bring us access to essential services to care HIV. Despite all, there have been noted improvements in dealing with HIV around the world with over 24.4 million people living longer to a meaningful future.

According to UNAIDS, global solidarity is one of the core values of the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA). Through solidarity, young people are empowered to collaborate and be in conversation to engage in challenging conversations on these diverse issues more effectively for the African continent. Only global solidarity and global shared responsibility will help us meet the Coronavirus and the AIDs pandemic and guarantee health for all. YALDA puts great emphasis on the importance of education and collaboration to develop solutions to future global challenges. With increased knowledge, people can think that stigma will be eliminated, there will be a reduction in the number of new infections, and there will be regular voluntary testing. In addition, it is a risk reduction for the African continent has higher numbers of people living with HIV/AIDS, therefore YALDA encourages everyone young people to always work together to overcome the world. YALDA is committed to taking the world in the fight against HIV.

Let us take charge, take part, and stand together in solidarity in the fight against HIV!

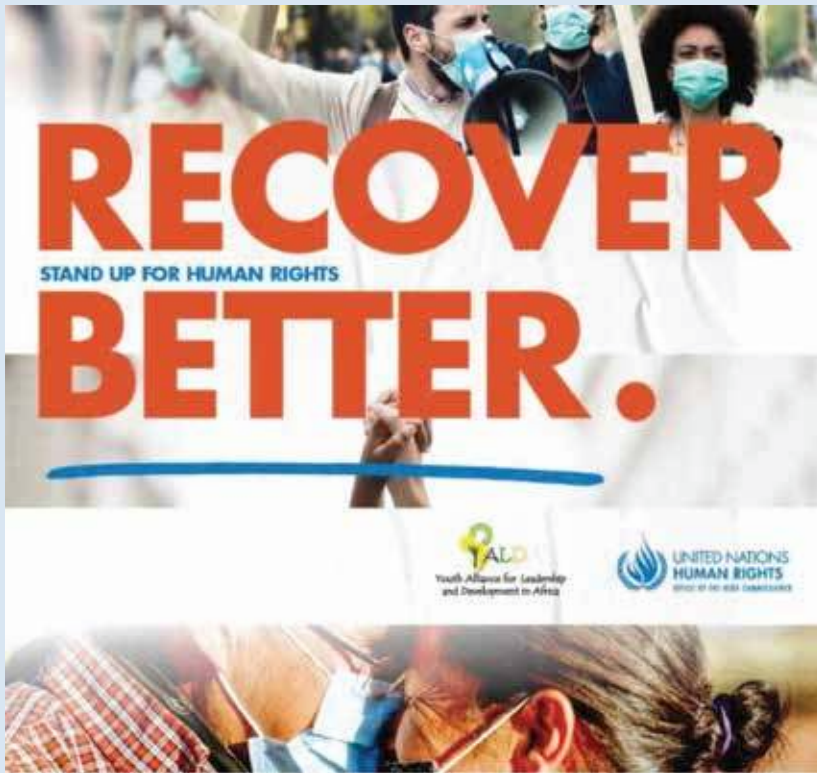
#WAD2020
#WorldAIDSDay

UNAIDS #WAD2020



December

United Nations Human Rights Day (10 December)



#StandUp4HumanRights #HumanRightsDay #YALDA4HumanRights

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and established the Human Rights Day to be commemorated annually on 10 December. The theme for 2020's Human Rights Day, 'Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights' highlights the opportunity to rebuild a better world in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic by prioritizing human rights issues as the world recovers.



Human Rights Day 10 December 2020 Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights

In 1948 the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and established the Human Rights Day commemorated annually on the 10th December. The UDHR is a milestone document that proclaims the inalienable rights that are common to all human beings – regardless of race, culture, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Its provisions include, among others, the right to freedom from slavery, to free elections in a regular basis of the elected representatives, to have access to justice, to work, to have a decent living, to have privacy and to enjoy rights of family life. The theme for this year is 'Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights'. This theme highlights the importance of using a better world beyond the COVID-19 pandemic to rebuild a better world beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. It calls for immediate, high-level political and public action, cultural events and activities throughout the UNPR and the role of human rights in the new world.

Human Rights activists urge annual review of human rights practices as the globe recovers from COVID-19 pandemic. The UNPR has been a key platform for human rights activists, lawyers, government officials to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights. It has also been a key platform for human rights activists, lawyers, government officials to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights. It has also been a key platform for human rights activists, lawyers, government officials to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights.

At the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA), we have been a key platform for human rights activists, lawyers, government officials to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights. It has also been a key platform for human rights activists, lawyers, government officials to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights.

Since 1948, the UNPR has been a key platform for human rights activists, lawyers, government officials to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights. It has also been a key platform for human rights activists, lawyers, government officials to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights.

Let's Recover Better by Standing Up for Human Rights!

#YALDA4HumanRights #StandUp4HumanRights #HumanRightsDay





HIGHLIGHTS FROM AFRICA YOUTH MONTH CELEBRATIONS 2020

By Katlego Nawa, Botswana

Africa Youth Day is commemorated annually on 1 November. The purpose of this day is to recognise youth as key stakeholders for social change, economic growth and sustainable development in all areas of African society. This year the theme for Africa Youth Day was “Youth Voices, Actions, Engagement: Building a Better Africa.” This year’s Africa Youth Month highlighted a number of issues, such as including youth in governance, and saw the release of both the policy brief on Youth, Peace and Security in Africa and the Africa Young Women’s Manifesto.



“Youth Voices, Actions and Engagement” simply means “inclusion”. African youth must be part of dialogues and conversations that affect their daily African realities. African youth represent the majority of the demographic landscape on the continent yet they remain invisible. Greater inclusion of African youth can be achieved through governance. “For sustainable youth inclusion, I recommend developing an enabling environment that prepares youth to enter the public service and governance. This can be done by developing structured Youth Internship Programmes to attract and train youth in public service”

- Aya Chebbi

Measures must be put in place to ensure and guarantee youth inclusion in parliament and electoral lists.

“We are ready as ambassadors and member states to discuss with the Youth Envoy and your structures how to make room for youth, their intelligence, creativity, their patriotic commitment and their desire for the future within the mediation groups that are deployed on the grounds where reconciliation, peace and justice need to be negotiated. The voice of youth needs to be heard,” Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Congo to the Republic of Ethiopia H.E. Jean-Léon Ngandu Ilunga stated in a meeting with the AU Youth Envoy.

Youth must be proactive!

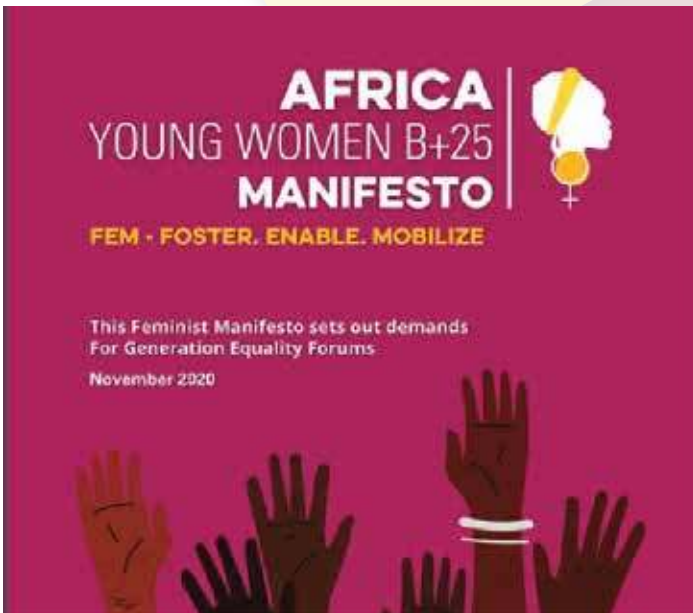


Towards building a better Africa, democratic processes must be followed. Youth voices are heard through using their voting power to put forth their demands. Voting is how youth exercise their right and duty to strengthen their democracy while being role models and agents of peace.

Make your voice heard through the ballot box peacefully!

During the Africa Youth Month, a policy brief on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) in Africa was released in an effort to maximise youth participation in peaceful processes. Africa's YPS agenda gained momentum owing to a string of commitments by the African Union's Peace and Security Council, to increase youth inclusion and participation in peace processes.

Youth continue to be agents of peace in building the Africa we want; it is up to them to set the example and chart a peaceful path. They should utilise technology and social media as tools for instilling peace. Differences must be resolved through dialogue. No one should resort to violence or discrimination during, before or after elections. This year we saw youth peacefully mobilising in different parts of Africa to end violence.



During the Africa Youth Month, the African Union Youth Envoy presented the Africa Young Women's Manifesto, which sets demands for Generation Equality Forums. The manifesto is the outcome of several consultations with more than 1500 youth – the tireless efforts of young women across the African continent. It lists a common set of demands for the achievement of gender equality and equity, as well as Agenda 2063. It is a blueprint that will inform policies, institutional processes and intersectional action programmes and measures, thereby empowering Africa's young women to articulate their concerns, to use their voices to bring more youth into this movement. South Sudan is the first country taking Sauti blog and publication

project to the national level to amplify the voices of young feminist women demanding an end to sexual and gender-based violence.-
Aya Chebbi

The African Union Youth Envoy teamed up with Africa CDC to save lives, and together they launched the Africa Mask Week from 23-30 November 2020 to encourage young people to rally behind the call to wear masks to stop the spread of COVID19. YALDA reminds youth across Africa that preventing the spread of the pandemic is our individual and collective responsibility. We rely on you to comply with safety protocols and to follow hygiene: WEAR a MASK and WASH your HANDS.



#AfricaYouthLead
#YALDA4youth
#AYM2020



Q&A: HOW TO ACE AN INTERVIEW

By Ezekiel Chidinma Ahika, Nigeria

Do you have an interview to attend that you are nervous about? You may have heard some myths and facts about interviews, and you are curious to know more. Maybe you have faced different interviews, and you are eager to know what you are missing or how to be better at your next interview. This article gives some frequently asked questions, so you can be great at your next interview. Here we go!



1. What questions will the interviewers ask?

A: Interviewers love to ask three common questions. They are like the "inescapable scenes" in interview sessions. In fact, I'm beginning to feel like they are becoming trite because almost every interviewer wants to ask them. But do you know what? It would be gross negligence on your part if you don't apply due diligence in preparing your answers to these questions:

I. "What are your strengths?"

To answer this question, mention some of your unique qualities that are relevant to the job. If possible, tell a story that shows how you applied your strengths to solve some practical problems.

II. "What are your weaknesses?"

As you might have guessed, strengths and weaknesses are duos that seem to be the very penchants of every interviewer. Well, I think that's because interviewers understand that no one is superhuman. We all have our flaws. Since they sincerely want to know your weaknesses, frankly but shrewdly, mention those that will not ruin you in front of your interviewers. For example, it is a very bad idea to mention these kinds of weaknesses:

"I suck at taking corrections more than once. It irks me."

"I only work best under pressure."

Then again don't give the common answer: "I work too hard." You may be the 99th of 100 interviewees who have used this line. So, don't toe this line.



Say something that differentiates you from the other candidates. For example, you can say that you lack time management when you are teaching, usually because you are always super excited about whatever you teach to the extent that you sometimes lose track of time. This is true and acceptable.

III. Why do you want this job?

Don't tell the interviewers you need the money. That is obvious! Everyone needs money. Also, don't remind them that it is because they called you for an interview. Instead, show them how much you are interested in working with the company and be detailed about why you are applying for the specific position. Let your excitement resonate with your voice and body language.

2. How do I dress for an interview?

A: The vogue dress code for interview sessions is to be professional with your attire and colour combination. Avoid whatever is too revealing or might be offensive. Then make sure you try out the outfit before you face the interview.

3. Is there a particular way I should behave in the interview session?

A: Apart from the general rule of being courteous, confident, and ready to express yourself, you just need to be your best self. Allow your interviewers to see the smart you. See the interviewers as common people. If possible, see them as your friends. They are not your antagonists. They need someone who can build their institution, and that someone is you. So, sit upright. Believe in yourself. Be articulate. And, most importantly, smile when you feel like.

4. What else should I prepare for?

A: There are many things to prepare for before a job. Here is a brief to-do list you should carry out before going for an interview: research the organisation, practise your responses with an expert or a friend, ensure everything you need is organised and remember to set your alarm so that you will arrive earlier than the stipulated time.

Now you are set to face that interview. We can't wait to hear how excellently you sailed through. Till then, keep your flags high and thread your path with blazes of hope!



OPINION DESK: HOW TO MANAGE TRANSITIONS DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES

By Raghda Medhat, Egypt

2020 was an unexpected year for many businesses, employees and entrepreneurs around the world. While businesses were forced to close several outlets, e-commerce flourished. Many big companies will make their employees work from home until mid-2021 as remote work becomes the new normal. In a six-month period, we witnessed a tremendous transformation that we would expect to happen only in the next ten years.

Whether you are a student, employee, entrepreneur, freelancer, or mother, it is necessary to know how to deal with changes as they happen. Here are our three tips to manage and strive through the transitions:

Be at the top of your game

After the layoffs that started in March during the hardest days of COVID-19, we knew from the inability of several companies to handle the difficult economic situation, that stability in the job market was just a myth. Within three months of entering lockdown, millions of people signed claims for unemployment benefits. The best security that you can have is to be the best in what you do. Having multiple talents is good, but it is important to be an expert in your field and be the one who has a significant impact in the organization. Always find new trends in your line of work, take an online course, read more about the field, network with other experts and learn from their experiences.

Save, Save & Save

I think people now understand the importance of saving money (cash). Learn to use your credit cards wisely. Make a monthly budget plan, cancel unnecessary subscriptions. It is better to save than fall into debt; think of money as a tool to live. Since you spend time and effort to earn money, it is also important to know how to use it judiciously. Plan and invest in an emergency fund that could sustain your needs for at least 6 months.

It is never useless to invest in yourself

As many people see me advise others to save and spend their money wisely, I never hesitate to advise them at the same time to invest in themselves. Invest in your body by eating healthy food and doing exercises; reduce stress by playing a sport or practicing a hobby; take courses; pay attention to your mental health; and always ask for help if you can. The time and effort you put into developing your skills and knowledge, whilst maintaining an enterprising personality and attitude, makes you a formidable asset. You will find huge gains along the way if you invest in yourself.

In the end, we always face difficulties accepting and adapting to the changes that happen around us. Who knows, this might be a turning point in your life, and these transitions could actually be beneficial to you.



OPPORTUNITIES CORNER

EXCITING NEW OPPORTUNITIES



Conferences & Workshops

- PERIPERI U Partners/World Bank Strengthening DRR Capacity in SADC Online Short Course Training 2021
January 15, 2021
- McKinsey & Company Women's Global Operations Summit 2021
February 3, 2021



Employment - Internships - Volunteer - Professional Development

Internships

- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Internship Program 2021
Deadline February 28, 2021
- Green Institute Internship 2021 for Young Leaders worldwide (grant of \$1,000)
Deadline January 19, 2021

Contests, Challenges & Awards

- Sama Randy Youth Write Contest 2021 for Young Cameroonians (Win CFAF 100,000)
Deadline February 28, 2021
- South African Plastics Pact Reuse Innovation Challenge 2021 (R500,000 prize)
Deadline February 1, 2021
- Kellogg-Morgan Stanley Sustainable Investing Challenge 2021 (\$10,000 prize)
Deadline February 13, 2021
- Schneider Go Green 2021 Global Student Competition for Middle East & Africa
Deadline February 28, 2021

Funding

Scholarships

- Bristol University Think Big Scholarships 2021 for study in the United Kingdom
Deadline June 14, 2021
- Ashinaga Africa Initiative 2021 for Anglophone and Francophone countries
Deadline February 28, 2021

Grants & Fellowships

- Migelien Gerritzen Fellowship for Conservation and Scientific Research 2021 (stipend available)
Deadline January 17, 2021
- 2021 STAARS Fellowship Program for early-career African Researchers
Deadline January 31, 2021

- Commonwealth Foundation Graduate Internship Program
Deadline January 14, 2021

Volunteer

- Apply for the ATLAS Citizen Volunteer Program!
Deadline rolling

Contact Us:

For more information please contact us on yaldafrika@gmail.com today!