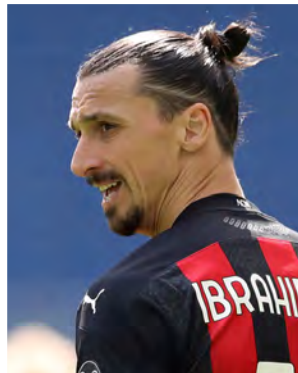
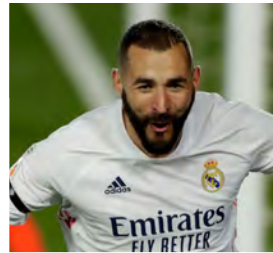


# BUSINESS DAY WEEKENDER

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## ENTERTAINMENT

10 unforgettable Nigerian soap operas of all time



## GLOBAL

Meet Tomiko Itooka, world's oldest living person, climbed Mount Ontake in her 70s

**PUBLISHER/EDITOR IN CHIEF**  
Frank Aigbogun

**EDITOR**  
Tayo Fagbule

**DEPUTY EDITOR**  
Lolade Akinmurele

**FOUNDING EDITOR BD WEEKENDER**  
Lehlé Balde

**DEPUTY EDITOR BD WEEKENDER**  
Ifeoma Okeke-Korieocha

**CHIEF SALES AND MARKETING OFFICER**  
Ijeoma Ude

**ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER**  
Queen Nkwocha

**COPY SALES MANAGER**  
Florence Kadiri

**DIGITAL SALES MANAGER**  
Linda Ochugbua

**HEAD OF DIGITALS**  
Nduka Asoh

**DESIGN AND ART DIRECTION**  
Emmanuel Odo  
(officialedenis@gmail.com)

**CONTRIBUTORS**  
Feyisitan Ijimakinwa  
Linda Ochugba  
Chisom Michael  
Chinwe Michael  
Titilade Oyemade  
Charles Ogwo  
Esther Emoekpere  
Anthony Nlebem  
Elijah Ochowechi  
Samira Bello  
Chioma Onuh

Enquiries  
weekender@businessday.ng

**ADVERTS**  
Ijeoma Ude  
+2348033225506

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BusinessDay Media Limited  
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Mobolaji Johnson Street, Ikoyi  
01-2799100  
www.businessday.ng

**LEGAL ADVISERS**  
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# FROM RONALDO TO MESSI: HERE ARE 10 MOST FOLLOWED FOOTBALLERS ON INSTAGRAM

ANTHONY NLEBEM

In today's era, every top football player boasts a massive presence on social media, especially on Instagram, where fans get a glimpse into their favourite stars' lives.

Among them, Cristiano Ronaldo holds the title of the most-followed footballer in the world, and his immense popularity makes it unlikely for anyone to surpass him in the foreseeable future.

Below are the top 10 most-followed footballers on Instagram in 2024:

## Cristiano Ronaldo

Followers: 638 million

Cristiano Ronaldo has solidified his position as the most followed footballer on Instagram. His massive

following of over 638 million people is a testament to his global popularity and influence. Cristiano Ronaldo made history by becoming the first person to surpass 1 billion followers across different social media platforms.

Ronaldo's active presence on social media allows him to connect with fans worldwide and share insights into his personal life and career. His engaging content and charismatic personality have contributed to his immense popularity.

## Lionel Messi

Followers: 504 million

Lionel Messi, despite being the second most followed footballer on Instagram, likely cares little about his social media following. With over 500 million followers, Messi has a massive global fan base.

Messi's understated public persona and focus on his football career have contributed to his popularity. Unlike some of his peers, Messi has not sought to build a larger-than-life public image. His exceptional talent and achievements on the field have captivated fans worldwide.



## Neymar

Followers: 224 million

Neymar has amassed a staggering number of Instagram followers throughout his illustrious career. His social media following is so vast that more people subscribe to his posts than the entire population of Brazil. It's no surprise that Neymar has become a prominent figure in the nation's political discourse in recent years.



## Kylian Mbappe

Followers: 122 million

Kylian Mbappé is a global football phenomenon, renowned for his exceptional on-field performances and massive social media following. The 25-year-old World Cup champion is one of only four footballers with a nine-figure Instagram fanbase.

Mbappé's rise has captivated fans worldwide. His journey began at a young age, with his first coach recalling his remarkable talent and unwavering determination.



## David Beckham

Followers: 88.4 million

David Beckham has been a marketing powerhouse throughout his career. His global popularity and iconic status have fueled massive sales of merchandise, including jerseys and footwear, totalling over £1 billion. His move to the MLS had a significant impact on the league's popularity, with merchandise sales increasing by 231% during his tenure.

Beckham's brand is further enhanced by his marriage to Victoria Beckham, a renowned fashion designer and former Spice Girl.



## Karim Benzema

Followers: 76.4 million

Karim Benzema's Instagram following experienced a significant surge after Cristiano Ronaldo departed from Real Madrid in 2018, especially during Real Madrid's triumphant 2021/22 Champions League campaign, his social media presence exploded. His impressive performances, including a record-breaking 10 goals in the Champions League knockout stages, propelled his follower count from 38 million to 60

million in just one year. His subsequent move to Al Ittihad in Saudi Arabia has been accompanied by challenges, but his social media following continues to grow.



## Ronaldinho

Followers: 76 million

Ronaldinho's influence extends far beyond the football pitch. He has a massive social media following, captivated by his iconic style and playful personality. His innovative skills and showmanship were showcased on YouTube during his peak in Barcelona, where his videos became viral sensations. The first-ever YouTube video to reach one million views featured Ronaldinho, cementing his status as a social media pioneer.



## Marcelo

Follower: 67.9 million

Despite his recent decline in playing time, Marcelo's popularity remains strong on Instagram. Known for his exceptional skills and charismatic personality, he has a dedicated fanbase, particularly in his native Brazil. In 2023, Marcelo returned to his boyhood club Fluminense, where he helped them win the Copa Libertadores, solidifying his legacy as one of the greatest defenders of all time. His impressive career includes five Champions League titles, a feat achieved by only a select few players.



## Zlatan Ibrahimovic

Followers: 64.5 million

Zlatan Ibrahimovic's larger-than-life personality extends beyond the football pitch. Known for his brash confidence and self-assured attitude, he has cultivated a strong social media presence. His posts often feature humorous references to himself as a god or a jungle cat, and he has even hinted at a potential crossover into mixed martial arts with a workout session featuring UFC star Khamzat Chimaev.



## Sergio Ramos

Followers: 64.2 million

Sergio Ramos, a four-time UEFA Champions League winner and World Cup champion, is widely regarded as one of the greatest defenders of all time. His exceptional career is reflected in his massive social media following. Ramos frequently shares updates on his personal life and fitness regimen, showcasing his unwavering dedication to his craft.

Ramos is married to Pilar Rubio, a renowned presenter and model with a significant social media following of her own. Their combined influence has likely contributed to Ramos' impressive Instagram fanbase.



# 10 UNFORGETTABLE NIGERIAN SOAP OPERAS OF ALL TIME

CHINWE MICHAEL



Over the years, Nigeria has carved a niche for itself in the global entertainment scene, with its Nollywood industry ranking as the second-largest in the world.

Among its many offerings, Nigerian soap operas have played a significant role in shaping the country's television history.

These dramas have kept audiences glued to their screens, often offering a mix of gripping storylines, cultural representation, and real-life reflections. Here's a look at the top 10 unforgettable Nigerian soap operas that have left an indelible mark on viewers.

## Fuji house of commotion

A lighter comedy-drama created by the late Amaka Igwe, Fuji House of Commotion followed the chaotic lives of Chief Fuji who is married to four women and has numerous kids to provide for.

With humor, it addressed family dynamics, sibling rivalry, and societal norms. It was beloved for its humorous portrayal of real-life situations, making it one of Nigeria's longest-running sitcoms.

The Nigerian soap opera featured Kunle Bamtefa as Chief Fuji, Toun Oni as Mama Moji, Ngozi Nwosu as Peace, Louisa Onu as Ireti, Ireti Doyle as Caro, Jude Orhoha as Gbenro, John Njamah as Rabiun, and Chika Chukwu as Jumoke among others.



### Checkmate (1991-1994)

For three years Nigerians were held spellbound by the Sunday night soap opera. Created and written by the late Amaka Igwe, Checkmate was the tale of the aristocratic family Haatrope trying to survive attacks from enemies both inside and outside of the family. The soap opera introduced many to Ego Boyo, the late Francis Agu, Norbert Young, and the charismatic Richard Mofe Damijo who played the role of Segun Kadiri. Checkmate also touched on societal issues such as cultism and polygamy.



### Papa Ajasco

Papa Ajasco and Company (formerly The Ajasco Family) is a Nigerian family television sitcom created by Wale Adenuga in 1997. The show is a spin-off of a feature film of the same title produced by Wale Adenuga in 1984, which in turn is based on the comic Ikebe Super. The story revolves around the Ajasco family and their comedic interpretations of major societal issues.

The main characters include the promiscuous patriarch, Papa Ajasco, his long-suffering wife Mama Ajasco, their mischievous son Bobo Ajasco, local playboy Boy Alinco, promiscuous gold-digger Miss Pepeiye, and illiterate ne'er-do-wells Pa James and Pa Jimoh.



### Everyday people

The flagship series starred top and entertaining Nollywood stars like the late Sam Loco Efe, Carol King, Nobert Young, Ify Onwuemene, Seun Soremi, Big Tony, Juliet Martin-Abazie, Ejiro Okurame, Ignis Ekwe, Desmond Elliot among others.

'Everyday People' aired in the early 2000s came with lots of comedy, suspense and tears. It revolved around the daily lives of families in an urban society. Produced by Tajudeen Adepetu, 'Everyday People' presented fans with a soundtrack most people are yet to forget.



### Super Story (2001-2018)

Super Story is the brainchild of TV producer Wale Adenuga who is also responsible for Papa Ajasco on TV and print. Super Story is a unique format that has appealed to the Nigerian audience.

The first season of the show told the story of Suara and Toyin Tomato (played by the brilliant Sola Sobowale). The debut season was a hit which has influenced the success of the following seasons.

Each season tells a different story centred around the lives of middle-class Nigeria.



### Ripples (1988-1993)

The soap opera produced by the Sheikh of Nollywood, Zeb Ejiro was a hit in its day and ran for five years. Even though Patrick Doyle who played the role of Melvin Dehinde-Phillips left the show controversially, it didn't stop the momentum of the show. Ripples also gave a little girl by the name of Genvieve Nnaji her first TV role.



### I Need to Know (1997-2002)

Starring Nigerian A-list actress Funke Akindele, the TV series was an educative show sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund. The TV series dwelt on the lives of seven secondary school students dealing with life in their teenage years. HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancy were strong themes in the show. The very popular theme song was done by Kalamashaka. For young people, I Need To Know was a TV series dedicated to them.



### Domino

During the early 2000s, Domino captured the hearts of Nigerian viewers with its upscale, dramatic portrayal of love, betrayal, and business intrigues. Its strong cast, which included the likes of Kate Henshaw and Fred Amata, was central to its popularity. Domino showcased the evolution of Nigerian soap operas in terms of production quality and storytelling.



### Dear Mother

Dear Mother was one of the most beloved Nigerian soap operas that aired in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Focusing on the intricacies of family life, particularly from a mother's perspective, it captured the hearts of viewers across the country with its relatable themes and heartfelt storytelling. The movie featured Evelyn Ikuenobe-Otaigbe as Mama Francis, and Francis Odega as Papa Francis, among others.



### This Life

This Life was one of Nigeria's most impactful soap operas, known for its intense drama, gripping storylines, and its ability to tackle real-life issues that resonated deeply with audiences. Airing in the early 2000s, the series was produced by Wale Adenuga Productions, the same creators behind other hit shows like Super Story.

The movie centered around various families and individuals, portraying the struggles they faced in dealing with societal issues such as poverty, infidelity, greed, and betrayal. Each season introduced different sets of characters and story arcs, but the common theme was the exploration of moral choices and their consequences.

The TV series featured Bimbo Akintola, Funlola Aofiyebi-Raim, Segun Arinze, and Yemi Blaq, among others.



# MEET TOMIKO ITOOKA, WORLD'S OLDEST LIVING PERSON, CLIMBED MOUNT ONTAKE IN HER 70S

CHISOM MICHAEL



**T**omiko Itooka, born on May 23, 1908, in Osaka, Japan, has been officially recognized as the world's oldest living person at the age of 116. She grew up as the second of three siblings and attended an all-girls high school, where she was an active volleyball player.

Tomiko married at the age of 20 and became a mother to two daughters and two sons. During World War II, she took charge of her husband's textile factory office in South Korea, showcasing her resilience and leadership during challenging times.

After the death of her husband in 1979, Tomiko continued to live independently in Nara Prefecture, Japan. It was during this period that she developed a passion for mountaineering.

Despite her advanced age, Tomiko scaled Japan's 3,067-meter Mount Ontake twice, surprising many by climbing in sneakers rather than traditional hiking boots. She also completed the Saigoku Kannon Pilgrimage twice, a journey that involved visiting 33 Buddhist temples in the Kansai region.

Tomiko's physical activity extended well into her later years. At the age of 100, she walked up the long stone steps of Japan's Ashiya Shrine without using a cane, illustrating her enduring strength and determination.

She moved to a nursing home in Ashiya, Hyogo Prefecture, in 2019, after living independently until the age of 110.

Despite her age, Tomiko remains mentally sharp and continues to express gratitude to her caregivers. Her daily routine includes consuming Calpis, a popular non-carbonated soft drink in Japan, which she enjoys every morning.

She also has a fondness for bananas, which her family believes contributes to her longevity.

Tomiko Itooka's life has been marked by significant historical events and technological advancements. She was born the same year the Wright Brothers made their first public flights, and the first long-distance radio message was sent from the Eiffel Tower. Throughout her life, she has witnessed and adapted to the many changes in the world, while maintaining her physical and mental well-being.

In July 2024, Tomiko was recognized by Guinness World Records as the world's oldest living person, following the death of 117-year-old Maria Branyas Morera of Spain. Her age has been validated by the Gerontology Research Group, making her the 24th-oldest person in recorded history.

Tomiko currently resides in a nursing home in Ashiya, Hyogo Prefecture, where she continues to be an inspiration to many, embodying the resilience and vitality that have defined her remarkable life.

# GUYANA: THE TINY COUNTRY WITH THE WORLD'S FASTEST-GROWING ECONOMY

CHISOM MICHAEL



**G**uyana, a small country in South America, is on track to become the fastest-growing economy globally, with an anticipated annual growth rate of 42.8 per cent in 2024, up from 33 per cent the previous year.

This exceptional growth, driven primarily by the oil sector, positions Guyana ahead of many industrialized and emerging economies. In the first half of 2024 alone, the economy expanded by 49.7 per cent, with oil production contributing 67 per cent to this growth. Located in the northeastern part of South America and bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, Brazil, Venezuela, and Suriname, Guyana is the third-smallest sovereign state by area in mainland South America.

Despite its small size and population of just 800,000, Guyana's oil sector has become a significant driver of economic growth, producing approximately 113.5 million barrels of oil in the first half of 2024. The sector is projected to grow by 56.4 per cent for the year.

Guyana's rapid growth is largely attributed to its massive offshore oil deposits, which have made it the world's fastest-growing country for two consecutive years. ExxonMobil and its partners Hess and the China

National Offshore Oil Company hold the majority stake in these deposits, estimated to contain over 11 billion barrels of oil.

By 2027, Guyana is expected to produce more oil per capita than Saudi Arabia or Kuwait and may surpass Venezuela as South America's second-largest oil producer after Brazil.

The country's Natural Resource Fund, projected to exceed \$3 billion by the end of 2024, underscores the significant impact of oil

revenues on its economy. Since the discovery of oil in 2016, Guyana's economic landscape has dramatically transformed.

With GDP growth of 62.3 per cent in 2022, the economy is expected to triple by 2027, driven by oil production that could reach 4,000 barrels per day, potentially raising Guyana's GDP to \$10 billion by 2030.

However, Guyana faces potential challenges associated with its rapid growth, as seen in other oil-rich nations like Venezuela, Angola, and the Congo. Issues such as social conflict, political instability, and the erosion of democratic institutions are common pitfalls that Guyana must navigate to avoid the so-called "resource curse" and ensure its newfound wealth benefits its citizens.

One key initiative to manage this wealth is the construction of Silica City, a new urban centre designed to support technology professionals and other industries. Financed by oil revenues, Silica City aims to attract investment in critical areas such as tourism, food production, industrial development, manufacturing, and biodiversity services.

# LAGOS TO QATAR: HOW IVIE OSULA MOVED FROM BEING A CORPORATE EXECUTIVE TO OWNING DWL

Ivive Osula's journey into fashion began not out of ambition, but out of necessity. As a corporate executive in Nigeria, Ivive found herself crafting bespoke power suits to enhance her presence at work. Her distinct sense of style quickly became her signature, capturing the attention of colleagues who couldn't help but notice the confidence and authority she projected. Inspired by on-screen characters like Jessica Pearson, Ivive's designs—particularly a striking royal blue peplum blazer—became a conversation piece. When she wore it to a management presentation, her colleagues were amazed. One even said, "Ivive, I need you to make me look like Olivia Pope!" That day, she received her first order, sparking the beginning of DWL (Defining Women's Lifestyle).

Affectionately dubbed 'The Vibrant Queen', Ivive's designs are known for their bold colours, powerful silhouettes, and ability to project strength and confidence.

What started as a personal project to amplify her own presence has now grown into a global luxury brand, empowering women in boardrooms, conferences, and high-profile events across Nigeria and beyond. DWL is more than just fashion—it's about helping women dress their way to confidence, offering them pieces that amplify who they already are, Osula said. Excerpts:

***Can you share the story behind the first bespoke power suit you created for yourself? What was the reaction like?***

My journey into power dressing started from my workwear during my banking career. I always loved a smart and unique look, and I started off designing custom structured midi length dresses for myself to work with five inches heels. Yes, I was that girl. I realized that this positioned me well as very





confident and put together. As I got into middle management, I realized that slapping on a blazer took my look to another level.

I was inspired by Jessica Pearson's character in the suits and intrigued by how she owned a room whenever she stepped in based on how confident and assertive she looked, commanding maximum respect.

I would always take screenshots and recordings until one day I designed a royal blue peplum blazer inspired by one of Jessica Pearson's styles. I had it made and wore it to the office on a day I had a management presentation to make and in my colleagues' words "ah, Ivie you've moved from wearing dresses now it's blazers". They had so many amazing things to say about my blazer and how much of a boss babe I looked like in it. When I mentioned that I designed it myself they were stunned.

That day, I got my 1st order, one of the senior management staff said, "I need some suits, I want you to make me look like Olivia Pope" and she ordered 2 blazers. With time, based on the continuous orders for blazers I told myself, "Ivie, DWL is cut out for blazers" and I decided to niche in blazers and the rest is history.

## ***What inspired you to transition from a corporate executive to the fashion industry? Was there a specific moment that made you take the leap?***

Yes, my journey from finance to fashion! I used to work with one of the most reputable international banks in the world. I had 14 years' experience in finance and supply chain finance. My journey into fashion started from immediate client validation. I used to make outfits for myself for work which helped me project myself as very confident and well put together. I liked the fact that my designs were unique to me, and it gave me extra satisfaction because I designed them. From my structured pencil dresses, middle length pencil dresses to my peplum blazers in vibrant colours. From the 1st outfit commissioned to be made from a colleague to the repeated orders I kept getting from colleagues and friends to make them pieces that were boardroom and presentation worthy to project a confident image, I knew I had to share my passion with the world.

DWL started off from being a side hustle until I left corporate altogether in 2019.

That was how I transitioned fully from finance into fashion, and this is where we are with DWL, getting into making power blazers for women in board rooms, conferences, media, dinners and all what not.

## ***Looking back at your journey, what has been the most rewarding moment for you as a designer and entrepreneur?***

As a designer and as an entrepreneur, for me daily rewarding moments are when clients give us feedback of how dressing in DWL has helped them either change the perception people have of them or help them project the right kind of perception through dressing. The fact that I, as a fashion designer and my brand can have that kind of impact is just the little everyday victories and rewarding moments.

Whenever I get that photo, video, voice note from DWL women around the world, I do a happy dance knowing that we are making global impact as a brand helping women project the best versions of themselves.

DWL breaking into the Middle East, was one of the most rewarding moments as a designer because that's when I took the brand from being a Nigerian brand to an international brand. As an entrepreneur, my ability to set up DWL in Nigeria and grow it while shuttling between Qatar and Nigeria, expanding the brand into the Middle East starting from Saudi & now solid in Qatar as well as being able to manage the businesses across borders is one of the most rewarding things for me as my ability to grow a sustainable business across borders.

A major milestone in its journey as an international brand was DWL being accepted into the prestigious Scale 7 Fashion acceleration program, a Qatar Development Bank funded project which gave the brand increased visibility and capacity to cement its status as an international brand and also establish retail partnership with one of Qatar's biggest departmental stores, 51 East.



## What personal challenges have you faced in your journey as a fashion entrepreneur, and how have they shaped you and DWL?

As a fashion entrepreneur especially one like me that manages business across borders, part of the challenges is that you realize that fashion trends vary across borders. And, for example, starting a business in Nigeria, moving into the Middle East, you recognize customers do not have the same preferences. You make blazers but it's not the same. The fact that customer taste and all is different and you have to be able to painstakingly research, understand the market and find out what works in different climates.

At the beginning you just feel like "oh there's no place for me here" but that challenge is what for example in my case gave birth to the concept of long line blazers for DWL. We realized that with long line blazers, we could break into what could ordinarily have been a modest market and that's how the concept of blending contemporary trends with modern fashion came about which stands till today as one of the DWL's unique selling points in the Middle East and even in Nigeria.

Another thing which is a general problem is getting, managing and retaining talents as a business. People that you plan to be around leaving a position and having to start again but part of what that did for us to do is that it has forced us build structures around the business such that you rely more on structures than people because people will come and go but the structures in place will help to minimize disruptions and new hires are able to fit into roles easier. These are ongoing things we manage everyday but as challenges come, part of the skill of being an entrepreneur is continuous problem solving. Many days, you wake up as a superhero, then some days you wake up and feel like so many things are going wrong, but you move and continue to tackle the challenge as they come.

And as a fashion entrepreneur, especially somebody like me who manages businesses across geographic locations, one of the challenges that you face is realizing that a design for example that can be an absolute favourite in one country based on buyer appetite, trends, customer preferences might not be receptive somewhere else. It could be a challenge. So, you then must realise that you need to research not just generalize. Sometimes you need to research per geographic location to know, so having to map out what works here, what would work here in terms of what has worked here, at the beginning started off as a challenge but part of the thing being a creative entrepreneur is to quickly use that as an advantage to then find out. For example, using this buyer preference as example, when we just got into the Middle East, Saudi, of course it looked like for a hot minute it was difficult for us to break into that market but we quickly realized that the concept of our long line blazers and then we realized that it was not just something that was accepted in the Middle East but something that could be worn universally and that's where our fusion of contemporary Western trends and cultural influences came about. And till today part of DWL's main unique selling points is the fact that a lot of our designs have a fusion of contemporary trends and modest fashion which is inferred in most of the kind of cuts in our jackets. So, something that was a challenge was something that has become a unique selling point for us.

## How did you manage the transition from creating bespoke outfits for yourself to establishing a global brand? What steps should young designers take to turn their passion into a business?

Setting up the DWL brand was built on customer validation from the beginning with my colleagues seeing designs I had made for myself and commissioning orders which led to the birth of the brand.

Learning from my own story, the first thing I would say is validating your idea. This is done by researching what the market wants and testing the product(s), this ensures you are putting products in the market that will sell. Part of the things you would learn to be a sustainable business is what you like is not necessarily what the market wants.

Another step is to identify your target market. You quickly realize that it's not family and friends that sell a business, it's appealing to the right target audience. When you can identify your target market, their buying behaviour and preferences, you are able to put out market-ready products that they will be willing to buy.

Another thing I would say is start small, business has so many moving parts outside of the direct product and looking to start with too many products and ideas can be overwhelming and even make you never get into it. Start with a few designs or ideas so its manageable and as you grow, with better authority you expand your scope.

Also, networking is very important. Build a network around people in the value chain of your line of business, this opens you up to collaborations, referrals as well as other opportunities to help position and grow your brand.

# OREOLUWA FINNIH LEADS DISCOURSE IN CHARTING PATH FOR BUILDING RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE LAGOS



**A** 2022 report by the Office of Sustainable Goals revealed a startling statistic: about 3 million Lagosians, that is 10 percent of the total population, live in hard-to-reach or underserved communities.

This figure, compounded by the city's rapid population growth, urbanisation, and projected rise in sea levels is posing a threat to the resilience of Lagos.

In a bid to change this narrative and build a resilient and sustainable Lagos State, Oreoluwa Finnih, the special adviser to Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu on Sustainable Development Goals recently gathered

stakeholders across the country to discuss how best to achieve sustainable development goals for Lagos State.

Themed 'Building a Resilient and Sustainable Lagos,' Finnih hinted that the Lagos State Sustainability Summit is symbolic of Nigeria's unity and commitment towards achieving a sustainable future for Lagos and significantly reflects the country's shared purpose, collective responsibility, and resoluteness in guaranteeing a better and more sustainable Lagos for future generations.



Finnih said the summit is only a result of a genuine collaboration and a thirst for excellence, adding that beyond this summit, she and her team have pooled resources, expertise, and resolve together to align their activities with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ensure that the vision of a sustainable and resilient Lagos becomes a reality. This, she said, is because her commitment is not merely superficial; but demonstrated through the integrated policies, strategic partnerships, and concerted efforts that they are witnessing.

This summit, she said, is one major outcome and an example of these endeavours. The theme for this summit, 'Building a Resilient and Sustainable Lagos' was neither randomly decided, nor is it out of place. It is a deliberate choice that mirrors our ambition of Lagos Sustainability Vision.

"In fact, it is built around the Lagos State Office of Sustainable Development Goals (OSDG), fundamental principles of social responsibility, equitable development, and the creation of an enabling environment for sustainable growth and development. "Building a sustainable Lagos has never been more important than now because of the surmounting pressures ahead. Going by the United Nations 2030 sustainability agenda, we are left with just six years to attain the sustainable development goals.

"Although Lagos remains ahead in the sustainability journey, we still face unique challenges that range

from rapid urbanisation to a growing population, and increased vulnerability to the impacts of climate change," Finnih explained.

She recognised the tireless efforts of three critical bodies who have been instrumental to the realisation of this summit: the Lagos State Office of Sustainable Development Goals (OSDG), the Lagos State Safety Commission, and the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA).

She said the OSDG's mandate has evolved to lead as the principal SDG coordinator in Lagos by championing initiatives that accelerate the attainment of the 17 goals. For us, sustainability is the practice of meeting today's needs without compromising the future generation's ability to meet their own needs. She stressed that the OSDG execution strategy is and will remain characteristically innovative, inclusive, and practical.

Finnih said she and her team has refined strategy on four pillars: Strategic Planning which aligns state-level initiatives with global sustainability targets, resource mobilisation, which secures the financial, technical, and human resources including forming strategic partnerships, advocacy and awareness which engages all sectors on the importance of sustainability, and of course monitoring & evaluation to track their progress, assess impact, and make informed adjustments to meet her objectives. In essence, she added that these pillars are directed



*"The OSDG has also designed a comprehensive framework and assembled a dedicated team for extensive monitoring and evaluation across both the public and private sectors. This is to compare our baseline and target outcomes and drive the change we seek," she said.*

During his keynote address, Rabiul Olowo, executive secretary and chief executive officer, Financial Reporting Council (FRC) of Nigeria said the FRC plays a crucial role in advancing sustainability practices through several key functions and initiatives which includes establishing and enforcing reporting standard, promoting best practices in corporate governance, training and education, facilitating transparency and accountability, monitoring and compliance, encouraging innovation and adoption of sustainable practice and collaboration with stakeholders.

Olowo mentioned five thematic levers for aligning financial strategies with the sustainable development goals to include better prioritization of resource allocation ( Budgeting), focusing on service delivery and outcomes, sustainable financing, economic empowerment and sustainability reporting.

He said FRC is not relenting on its efforts to promote and enforce sustainability practices, support innovation, and collaborate with various stakeholders.

towards the Lagos State Development Plan 2052, closely aligned with the SDGs, to reinforce our commitment to establishing Lagos as Africa's Mega City.

"For this cause, we have commissioned the OSDG Lighthouse Project, a flagship programme targeted at improving the livelihood of thousands of Lagosians in hard-to-reach or underserved communities.

*"We have also commenced the Lagos Minds Project geared towards bettering the mental well-being of our teeming young population.*

*"We are also building a comprehensive data repository to guide the OSDG and other stakeholders in evidence-based decision-making.*

*"By doing so, we will help drive Nigeria's transition towards a more sustainable and resilient future.*

"The FRC alone cannot handle this task and that's why partnerships like this are the only way to advance sustainability practices in Lagos. This is a responsibility that the FRC is happy to execute with all the seriousness that it deserves," he added.

Also speaking at the summit, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu, Governor of Lagos State said the summit serves as a pivotal moment to build consensus and forge new partnerships around the priorities shared. Sanwo-Olu who was represented by Kadri Obafemi Hamzat, Deputy Governor, Lagos State said Lagos State Development Plan (2022–2052) sets the



framework for our long-term vision. It emphasizes four key pillars: economic growth, human capital development, infrastructure expansion, and environmental sustainability.

At the heart of this plan, he said, is a commitment to using technology, innovation, and inclusive governance to build a city capable of adapting to an unpredictable future.

Sanwo-Olu said Lagos, like many urban centers worldwide, faces increasing pressures from rapid urbanization, climate change, and social inequality. He said but instead of being daunted by these challenges, he sees them as opportunities to shape a Lagos that thrives on resilience and sustainability. "Sustainability has always been central to our developmental agenda. In 2021, Lagos became the first sub-national government to activate the \$1 trillion Nigerian Green Bond Market Development Program, paving the way for sustainable finance in urban development.

"This bold move is more than just a financial milestone, It is a testament to our commitment to building a greener, smarter Lagos.

"Our Lagos Climate Action Plan sets ambitious targets to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. It encompasses critical sectors such as energy, food systems, manufacturing, transportation, and urban infrastructure.

"By mobilizing resources towards green projects, we are driving the systemic changes needed to foster sustainable growth without compromising our environment or the well-being of our people," the governor explained.

He disclosed that Lagos is also pushing forward with projects such as the Circular Lagos Project, which promotes zero waste and a circular economy.

These initiatives, he said underscore its focus on long-term strategies that unlock the potential within the sustainability ecosystem and support Lagosians in living more harmoniously within the city.

"Sustainability is not just about the environment; it is about creating a city that works for everyone. The future we envision for Lagos is one where no one is left behind. Our city planning must address the needs of all residents—urban and rural alike—and consider the cross-sectoral impact of our policies.

"We are dedicated to creating public spaces and services that promote social interaction, safety, and inclusivity. Cities are made by people, and they must be for the people.

"This means ensuring that all residents, regardless of income or background, have access to the resources and opportunities that will enable them to thrive," Sanwo-Olu said.

# MINISTRY OF ARTS, CULTURE, AND CREATIVE ECONOMY, NIGERIA'S GOT TALENT SEASON 3 PARTNER TO BOOST TALENT DEVELOPMENT



The Ministry of Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy has announced a partnership with Pure Imagination Production & Filmworks Limited, the official franchise holder of the Got Talent reality show in Nigeria and Ghana, for the much-anticipated new season of Nigeria's Got Talent.

This collaboration aims to drive talent discovery and development across the country, supporting the Federal Government's initiative to diversify the economy through investment in the creative sector. The National Council for Arts and Culture is also a key partner in this effort.

This partnership marks a pivotal moment in Nigeria's Got Talent history, blending entertainment with cultural promotion.

The Ministry will take an active role in the show, with over 15,000 participants benefiting from its Creative Leap Accelerator Program (CLAP), a flagship initiative designed to fuel economic growth, foster innovation, and empower the nation's creative talent. Clap is implemented through the National Council for Arts and Culture and integrated with ICE & Origins key initiatives of the NCAC which are embedded in Clap.

"CLAP is designed to foster an environment where talent can thrive, ideas can flourish, and new industries can emerge," said Musawa.

She emphasized the importance of capacity building and collaboration, stating, "Through the clap platform we are offering world class and comprehensive form training, mentorship, and resources, we aim to empower our creatives talent to excel and innovate. The National Council for Arts & Culture is the implementation agency and has built a network of close to 1000 hubs, co working spaces and partners in the public and private sector to deliver this program.

Obi Asika, Director-General of NACA, added, "We believe Nigeria's Got Talent is more than a competition; it's a celebration of our national identity. By showcasing our natural talent, cultural heritage and destinations on this global platform, we are projecting the culture while introducing it to new generations and international audiences. NCAC is the implementing agency for CLAP which is aligned with ICE our digital platform with blended learning through partner hubs and Origins which is our data & business insights platform which will serve as a digital repository for Nigeria's history, culture and content.

"This is not just about discovering the most talented Nigerians; it's about celebrating who we are as a people," said Mr. Pedro Rotimi, Principal Consultant of Pure Imagination and Filmworks.

"With the global distribution power of Fremantle, including partnerships with YouTube and TikTok, Season 3 promises to be the most exciting and culturally rich edition yet. We're weaving the vibrant tapestry of Nigeria's diverse cultures into the very fabric of this competition.

"The Show will air on Netflix, NTa, Ait, Africa Magic as well as youtube and tiktok wit. Got Talent is the world's premier Reality Show. It's The No.1 entertainment show in 35 countries across the globe, as well as the Guinness World Record holder as the most successful reality format with 87 Franchises currently running across the world.

" It is the talent show with no age limits, no artistic restrictions and no cultural boundaries. It combines emotional auditions with judges' battle and incredible talent performances."

As the excitement for Nigeria's Got Talent Season 3 builds, NGT is set to air in the first quarter of 2025, and the buzz is palpable.

This season will feature auditions in 15 cities across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, offering a platform for participants nationwide to shine. Beyond showcasing individual talents, the new season will celebrate Nigeria's rich cultural diversity, with each audition city featuring exhibitions, performances, and collaborations with local creative artists as well as capacity building workshops and talent management sessions led by NCAC.

The return of Nigeria's Got Talent offers opportunity for state governments to showcase their unique arts, culture, and tourism to a global audience. As the show travels across 15 cities, each state can leverage this international platform to attract attention and investment.

Nigeria's Got Talent made its unforgettable debut in 2014, captivating audiences and leaving a lasting impact on the entertainment scene. After a hiatus due to the global economic downturn, the new season will launch production in January 2025, reigniting the search for Nigeria's Most Talented individual.

The Ministry of Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy is entrusted with the responsibility of harnessing, nurturing, and maximizing talents, potential, and cultural assets for the advancement of national development.

National Arts and Culture Agency The National Arts and Culture Agency (NACA) is Nigeria's premier institution for the promotion and preservation of the country's cultural heritage.

Through strategic partnerships and national initiatives, NACA fosters a deeper appreciation of Nigerian arts and culture across the entire ecosystem and is the home of Nigerian Soft Power.

Pure Imagination and Filmworks is the official franchise holder of Nigeria's Got Talent, committed to delivering world-class entertainment that highlights Nigeria's vast talent and rich cultural heritage. Known for innovation and excellence, the company continues to raise the bar in the Nigerian entertainment industry.

# 13 BEST CITIES FOR NIGHTLIFE IN THE WORLD IN 2024

CHISOM MICHAEL



Nightlife varies across the globe, with each city offering a unique experience influenced by local culture, music, and venues.

According to Time Out, to find the best cities for nightlife in 2024, they surveyed thousands of people across numerous global cities. Participants rated their local nightlife based on quality and affordability, acknowledging that steep entrance fees or costly drinks can ruin the experience.

After analyzing the data, they excluded cities with lower overall scores, selecting only the highest-rated city from each country.

Here are the 13 best cities for nightlife in the world in 2024

## Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Rio de Janeiro, known for its annual Rio Carnival, tops the list. The city's nightlife is centred around bohemian bars, live music, dance halls, and spontaneous samba parties. Notable areas include Lapa and Botafogo, where new gastronomic hotspots double as dance floors on weekends.



## Manila, Philippines

Manila stands out for its affordability and vibrant nightlife. The city's late-night food markets and lively districts, such as Poblacion and Bonifacio Global City, offer a dynamic experience. Salcedo Village, home to trendy restobars, and other venues like Cheshire and Uma Nota, add to the city's appeal.



## Berlin, Germany

Berlin is renowned for its club scene, 24-hour parties, and techno music. Iconic clubs such as Tresor and Matrix, alongside the lively areas of Friedrichshain and Warschauer Straße, define the city's nightlife. Berlin continues to evolve with new venues like RSO and outdoor raves gaining popularity.



## Guadalajara, Mexico

Guadalajara, the birthplace of mariachi music and tequila, is highly rated for its nightlife quality. The Expiatorio neighbourhood offers a relaxed atmosphere with impromptu salsa dances, quirky bars, and local

food stalls. Popular spots include the rooftop bar El Cardenal and the 1er Piso Jazz bar.



## Austin, USA

Known as the Live Music Capital of the World, Austin's nightlife centres around live music venues and outdoor spots like Barton Springs. Cheer Up Charlie's and other clubs draw diverse crowds, making the city's nightlife one of the best in the U.S.



## Lagos, Nigeria

Lagos is the epicentre of Afrobeats, with a nightlife scene that reflects the city's rich cultural history and forward-looking events. Notable venues include Freedom Park Lagos and The House on Victoria Island, which hosts various nightlife events, from salsa nights to club nights.



## Rotterdam, Netherlands

Rotterdam's nightlife is spread across the city, with venues like Maassilo and Annabel standing out. The city's nightlife is characterized by its inclusivity and the spread of activities across various neighbourhoods, offering a diverse and unique experience.



## Manchester, UK

Manchester's nightlife is legendary in the UK, with a vibrant club scene that is currently transforming. Hidden and The White Hotel are popular among clubbers, while newer venues like Peste and DBA offer cutting-edge experiences in unassuming locations.



## Budapest, Hungary

Budapest offers a wide array of nightlife options, from ruin bars to rooftop venues with stunning city views. Popular spots include Budapest Park, Instant-Fogas, and the A38 Boat, which are known for their vibrant atmospheres and eclectic offerings.



## Accra, Ghana

Accra's nightlife is centred around outdoor events, including rooftop bars, open-air concerts, and beach parties. Iconic venues like Palm Moment's Fake Fridays and Frontback set the standard for high-energy nights out.



## Buenos Aires, Argentina

Buenos Aires is famous for its tango clubs and late-night theatres. The city's nightlife scene includes bars like Mixtape, Punta Mona, and CoChinChinaBar, which cater to diverse crowds with their themed parties and relaxed atmospheres.



## Taipei, Taiwan

OTaipei's nightlife is characterized by its bustling night markets, glitzy clubs, and KTV rooms. Xinyi District remains the hub for bar and club hopping, with popular venues like Final, Studio 9, and Draft Land drawing in the crowds.



## Singapore, Singapore

Singapore's nightlife is diverse, ranging from iconic clubs like Zouk and Marquee to underground techno nights and daytime parties. Local collectives like Thugshop and Darker Than Wax lead the way in offering unique experiences, including wellness-focused events like the Sunda Festival.

# HENKEL, SILVERBIRD PARTNER TO EMPOWER NIGERIANS

FEYISHOLA JAYESIMI



Guy Murray Bruce, president, Silverbird Group; Paula Ezendu, brand influencer, GOT2B and Rajat Kapur, managing director and chairman Henkel Nigeria at the announcement of the partnership in Lagos recently.

**H**enkel Nigeria, a leading German multinational renowned for its iconic brands such as WAW, Nittol, and Got2B, has partnered with Silverbird Group to empower Nigerians.

Also, the collaboration is a celebration of individuality, creativity, and empowerment that aligns perfectly with the brand identity of Got2B, Henkel's Beauty consumer brand.

The partnership marks a significant milestone for both Henkel Nigeria and Silverbird Group as they work together to inspire and empower individuals across Nigeria.

More than just a hair styling brand, Got2B champions individuality and confidence, inviting consumers to embrace their unique identities with its empowering tagline, "For whoever you want to be."

Rajat Kapur, managing director of Henkel Nigeria, expressed his excitement about the partnership, stating that the strategic collaboration embodies the organisation's shared vision of empowering Nigerians to express their individuality and creativity. "We are particularly grateful to Guy Murray-Bruce, President of Silverbird Group. His insights as a member of Henkel Nigeria's Advisory Council have continued to enrich our organisation."

Kapur invites all Nigerian women who appreciate style and elegance to join the Got2B movement saying, "Embrace your individuality, share your unique styles with the world, and together, let's celebrate the beauty of being authentically you."

Henkel Nigeria also used the occasion to announce Paula Ezendu as an inspiring co-creator and influencer for the Got2B

brand.

Henkel Nigeria's MD said that the choice of Paula "signifies the commitment to celebrating diverse styles and empowering Nigerian women. We are excited to have her represent our vision and inspire others to join the Got2B movement."

Silverbird Group, shares a philosophy centered on providing contemporary family entertainment and relaxation to Nigerians.

As a leading media and entertainment company in Africa, the organisation focuses on delivering high-quality services across various sectors including radio, television, real estate, and cinemas. This partnership with Henkel Nigeria will further enhance Silverbird's commitment to enriching the lives of Nigerians through innovative and engaging content.

"We are excited to partner with Henkel Nigeria, a brand that resonates with millions of Nigerians. This strategic alliance allows us to combine our strengths to create impactful experiences that celebrate the beauty of self-expression and individuality," said Guy Bruce, president, Silverbird Group.



# AKADA CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL 2024 TARGETS NIGERIAN TODDLERS' LITERACY PROMOTION

CHARLES OGWO



In its efforts to inspire young readers and encourage lifelong love of reading and promote literacy among Nigerian children, the Akada Children's Book Festival (ACBF), hosts the sixth edition of the anniversary in Lagos.

According to Olubunmi Talabi, a renowned author and convener of ACBF which is the first and largest Nigerian book festival dedicated exclusively for children, the 2024 festival will hold on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at UPBEAT Recreation Centre in Lekki-Lagos.

Talabi explained that the annual event provides a platform for the work of indigenous authors and encourages widespread engagement in children's books and literature.

"The 2024 ACBF showcases literary works created for a diverse audience of children. Previously, most children's books available were imported and predominantly featured cultures different from our own.



“This led me to consider that if our kids are only exposed to books set in other cultures, they might start to feel there is something wrong with their own culture and the people who look like them.

“In response, I began writing books featuring protagonists who look like children in this environment, placing them in adventures and settings similar to those our children experience every day,” she explained.

The renowned author further revealed that Akada Children's Book Festival was born from the above stated initiative and has since grown into a platform for showcasing various authors.

“I am thrilled to see an increasing number of people writing for children and we love seeing them engage with stories that reflect their own experiences and perspectives,” she said.

This year's theme is “Read Your Way,” which emphasises the importance of promoting literacy and fostering a reading culture among children aged 13 and below.

According to the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education,

Nigeria faces challenges in promoting reading culture. Data from the commission indicates that a four out of 10 portion primary school children struggle with reading comprehension.

A 2023 United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) report further highlights this issue, stating that 75 percent of Nigerian children aged seven to 14 cannot read simple sentences.

Nnenna Ochiche, author of *Captain of Aster*, commenting on the upcoming event, said, “The festival serves as a vibrant platform for authors of African origin, offering them a unique opportunity to reach wider audiences and build their readership.”

Ochiche buttressing the significance of festival said that through the ACBF many authors have gained significant recognition, as it continues to support authors, and also places a strong emphasis on children's learning.

“Recognising that children learn best through play, the festival creates a safe and engaging environment filled with relatable characters and engaging sessions.

“By providing carefully curated content that is both child-friendly and educational, the festival not only celebrates literature but also fosters a love of reading among young readers,” she said.

Aduke Gomez, the author of *Iya Alaro Saves The Day*, in her comment highlighted the need to expose children to the history and culture of their land through books by indigenous authors.

“You are not born knowing your history, you have to be told it by elders and people who have studied it.

“When we read, we learn the habits of wherever the author is from. It is great to know what people do in other places, but it is also important to understand where we are from,” she said.

Besides, Gomez said children's books are the foundation of learning, and with a platform like Akada Children's Book Festival, parents can nurture a love for reading while showcasing stories that reflect their rich African heritage.

According to the organisers, this year's festival will feature 32 original children's books created by Nigerians home and abroad. Notable titles include *Captain of Aster* by Nnenna Ochiche; *Iya Alaro Saves The Day* by Yewande Amusan & Aduke Gomez; *Ada and The Emir* by Nkechi Anya; *An African Christmas with Queenie & King* by Olunosen Ibhaze; *Toru and The Mango Seed* by Omolara Cookey; *Obafemi Alakara and The Bush Babies* by Kayode Valentine; *A School Trip Like No Other* by Jacqueline Agweh; *The Magic Jalabiya* by Ayo Oyeku, and *Terrified Not* by Farida Bello, among others.

Moreover, the festival will feature workshops and sessions led by experts designed to help children develop literacy, problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills.

A special guest appearance by Atinuke, the acclaimed author of the *Anna Hibiscus* series and *Baby Goes to Market*, is highly anticipated. Her beloved books are bestsellers in both the UK and the US, and her presence promises to be an enriching experience for all attendees.

The 2024 ACBF is loaded with a diverse range of activities, including author-led book readings, book chats, featured titles story time, book exhibitions, and the announcement of winners from the annual writing and illustration competitions.

Attendees can also enjoy a chess tournament, sip and paint sessions, an art exhibition, and a spotlight on young authors featuring readings and questions and answers sessions.

There will also be insightful sessions for parents and teachers, besides professional workshops tailored for writers, illustrators, and publishers. A Yoruba-Themed Story Time, featuring traditional Yoruba stories, storytelling techniques, and cultural activities will be a new upskilling innovative in the events.

Since its inception in 2019, the Akada Children's Book Festival (ACBF) has attracted over 8,500 attendees, becoming a must-attend event for anyone passionate about children's literature and literacy.

The festival organisers have donated more than 4,206 books to date, further contributing to the mission of improving access to books. Beyond sparking children's interest in African stories and authors, ACBF also empowers parents and educators to recognize the importance of nurturing a love for reading, reading aloud together, and writing African stories for the next generation. The event is free for all participants. Registration is available here. You can also follow @akadafestival on social media for updates.



# FROM CLASSROOMS TO GARDENS: WHAT NIGERIA CAN LEARN FROM MALAYSIA

...Why experiential learning eco-friendly environment is critical to Nigeria's quality education outcome

CHARLES OGWO



In the face of growing environmental issues and climate change, experts believe that traditional classroom settings, though fundamental, are not enough to fully equip children to circumnavigate the murky waters of the contemporary world. Outdoor classrooms refer to educational spaces that take learning and teaching outside of traditional indoor settings into the natural environment. These spaces provide opportunities for students to engage with nature, explore, ask questions, and learn in a hands-on and experiential manner.

Consequent to the above, the National Library of Nigeria (NLN) in promoting environmental literacy and sustainable practices that transform the traditional library experience recently partnered with the Zaccheus Onumba Dibiaezue Memorial Libraries (ZODML), a non-profit organisation to establish The Green Library in the country.

Obianuju Onuorah, the zonal director at NLN speaking on the importance eco-friendly learning environment, said before the partnership the Nigerian apex library



had plans to establish children's library in all of its 52 branches across the country.

“The Green Library is a reading place with a difference, it is mainly for children from four to 17 years and there are a lot of activities planned for them. They will read, play, and relax. The children will also be taught on conservation of the environment, which means to be eco-friendly,” she said.

Ifeoma Esiri, the coordinator of ZODML said the idea of the green library is a place for hands-on learning and exploration for children.

“The Green Library is a place for hands-on learning and exploration where children and young adults are inspired to become active conservationists of the future,” she said.

Nigeria can borrow a leaf from Malaysia where various public and private educational institutions, ranging from preschools up to universities, are experimenting with outdoor classrooms.

Malaysia unlike Nigeria where private schools are established without giving cognisance to gardens,

and spacious learning environments, has made eco-friendly learning part of its curriculum.

According to The Star report, “These spaces, such as edible gardens or parks, allow students to explore subjects like Science, Mathematics, and Art more dynamically and interactively.

“More than just about plants and play, they represent a fresh and much-needed shift in how we educate our children.”

In addition, the report said that exercise emphasises sustainability and ecological awareness, which fosters a deep connection to the environment, promotes physical and mental well-being, inspires curiosity and creativity, and offers a holistic approach to education. Though this comes with some measure of challenges, the Malaysian education authorities left no stone unturned in their efforts to make the exercise a success.

Ngeow Pui Lin, a co-founder at Rimbum Montessori in Kuala Lumpur, emphasised how teachers are essential in laying the foundation for curiosity and the importance of hands-on learning.



“The way they approach the space by allowing students the freedom to explore and building confidence in nature sets the tone for how children will learn in these environments.

“We try to let the kids have ample garden time to run around and explore in the garden, dig holes, play with mud or search for bugs. So the kids get to be dirty and run free in the garden,” Lin said.

Eng Kia Hun, the principal of Hankidz Puchong, explained that initially, the garden was a challenge for both teachers and students, primarily due to a lack of knowledge and experience in gardening.

“It’s also worth noting that the journey of outdoor education is just as transformative for the teacher as it is for the student, and can be a daunting process without guidance,” Hun said.

Okah-Tim Joy, a lecturer at Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, explaining the impact of outdoor classrooms in environmental education in Nigeria said educators and schools have embraced outdoor classrooms as a way to create engaging and holistic learning environments.

“With hands-on experiences, students can connect theoretical knowledge with real-world applications. Outdoor classrooms also foster a sense of connection

and stewardship towards the natural world, encouraging sustainable practices and environmental awareness,” she said.

More so, she pointed out that outdoor classrooms offer valuable learning opportunities that combine academic growth with hands-on experiences in nature.

“They have been proven to enhance student engagement, creativity, and overall well-being. “By incorporating outdoor education into traditional curricula, educators can provide a more enriching and well-rounded learning experience for their students,” she noted.

This aligns with the country’s Green School Project which is aimed at cultivating environmentally conscious students by integrating sustainability into all aspects of school life, fostering a culture of ecological stewardship, and preparing future generations to lead in creating a sustainable world.

Education policymakers and implementers should begin to ensure that schools, especially private ones, are not just blocked in addition, they must have the needed space for hands-on learning eco-friendly environment outside the traditional classroom settings.

# MEET AKINGBOLA, A NIGERIAN RECIPIENT OF USA PASSION IN SCIENCE AWARD

CHARLES OGWO



**A**dewunmi Akingbola, a medical doctor, an alumnus of Lagos State University College of Medicine Ikeja, Nigeria, and a scientist at the University of Cambridge, was recently recognised as one of 12 global recipients of the 'Passion in Science Award' by New England BioLabs.

The award that honours individuals in the humanitarian category and acknowledges Akingbola's excellence in infectious diseases research and their significant social impact through HealthDrive Nigeria. This recognition celebrates their scientific contributions and their efforts to use their expertise

for humanitarian purposes, particularly in addressing health challenges in underserved communities. At Cambridge, Akingbola has led innovative research on infectious diseases disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations that is the People Who Inject Drugs in the United Kingdom.

His work can advance an understanding of disease transmission and treatment, particularly in viral Hepatitis C, and the use of Complete Case Analysis and Multiple Imputation to handle missing values in epidemiological data.

In addition to their academic research, Akingbola is the driving force behind HealthDrive Nigeria, an initiative dedicated to reducing the burden of infectious diseases with emphasis on viral Hepatitis in Nigeria. The project focuses on health education, disease prevention, subsidized vaccination exercises, and improving access to medical care in rural and underserved communities. Through outreach and partnerships with local healthcare providers, HealthDrive Nigeria has made a tangible impact on the health and well-being of many Nigerians. As part of the Passion in Science Award, Akingbola will receive a fully-funded trip to New England BioLabs' headquarters in Boston, USA, including two nights of accommodation.

Additionally, a cash prize will be awarded to a non-profit project of their choice, which he has decided to direct toward HealthDrive Nigeria to further expand its efforts in tackling infectious diseases. This award highlights Akingbola's commitment to bridging the gap between scientific research and real-world application.

In accepting the award, he expressed gratitude and emphasized the importance of continuing to combine science with humanitarian work to address pressing global health challenges.

With this recognition, Akingbola is poised to make even greater contributions to science and society, improving the lives of those most affected by infectious diseases.

# TOP 10 MOST TRAVELLED COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD

ELIJAH OCHOWECHI



A recent research conducted by Ubuy, a one-stop shopping destination, offering a wide range of premium products at competitive prices, showed nations that have the highest rates of travel.

The number of trips taken for both personal and professional purposes, the frequency with which people search for travel-related terms, and the amount of money spent on foreign travel were all examined in this study. Together, these indicators yielded a final score that gave a clear ranking.

France is the most traveled country, with more than 200 million journeys made and more than 30 million queries about travel.

Germany stands out as having the biggest international tourist expenditures, having spent \$101.2 billion on travel.

Finland, with its smaller population, has the most journeys per person, averaging six.

## France

France is the most traveled country, with an overall rating of 29.1 out of 30. Out of the 200 million travels made by French individuals, more than 181 million are done for private purposes. This ranks top on the list with an average of three trips per individual. France is the most travel-interested country among the top 10, with over 30 million searches related to travel.

## Germany

Germany has the second-highest overall rating (26.8) among the nations that prefer to travel. In order to get additional experiences, Germans make approximately 178 million travels—an average of two excursions per person—to other places. The nation tops the list of countries that spend the most on travel, with a total of \$101.2 billion.

## Spain

With an overall rating of 20.7, Spain is ranked third. Like Germans, Spaniards travel on average two times a year, or more than 110 million times. Over 21 million searches relating to travel are conducted by them, indicating a considerable interest in travel despite their lesser expenditures on foreign tourism.

## Sweden

Sweden, with a score of 16.7, is in fourth place for greatest exploration of new overseas destinations. Among the top 10 countries in terms of travel frequency per capita, Swedes have one of the highest rates with five trips per person. Similar to Germany and Spain, they have a high degree of interest in travel on Google.

Poland, with an overall rating of 15.8, makes the top five nations in terms of travel. Poles travel less than the top four nations—an average of one trip per person, primarily for private travel. Despite spending the least on foreign tourism of all the top 10, Poland has a greater interest in travel, as seen by the more than 20 million Google searches for travel-related terms.

## Italy

Italy has a composite score of 7, making it the sixth most traveled country. Similar to Poles, Italians typically make one journey per person. Compared to Poland, their expenditures on foreign tourism are larger.

## Netherlands

With a score of 12.8, the Netherlands ranks seventh among nations where citizens like traveling overseas. Like Germany and Spain, the Dutch travel frequently, with an average of two trips per person, and primarily for private purposes. Locals in the nation also perform a lot of searches for tickets and other travel-related items.

## Finland

Finland, with a composite score of 11.0, ranks in eighth place. Among the top 10 countries, Finns have the highest average number of trips per person—six on average. Finland continues to be a popular destination, trailing the Dutch by only 1 million searches.

## Switzerland

Switzerland, with an overall rating of 10.0, is the ninth nation exploring new areas. Over 13 million travels are taken by Swiss citizens, according to Eurostat. Compared to Finns, their searches for travel-related content are marginally lower.

## Portugal

Portugal's 9.6 composite score puts them in tenth position. Portuguese travelers spend the least amount of money on foreign travel, at 3.5 million, while taking over a million more trips than Swiss travelers.





# SUICIDE PREVENTION IN FOCUS

**T**trigger warning: This article talks about suicide and self-harm. Mainly prevention and overviews but please take care if this topic may be triggering. If you need to talk to someone, please go through the following:

Hi guys, coming in on a more mellow note today. It's September and apart from being my birth month, it's also Suicide Prevention Month. Nigeria currently has the highest rate of suicide and depression in Africa according to a study conducted in 2021, which focused solely on Nigerian newspapers coverage of suicide stories (excluding suicide bombers and non-Nigerian nationals).

Nigeria's Generation Z is facing a mental health crisis that is often underreported and under-addressed. With societal expectations, economic hardships, social media pressures and growing insecurity, young Nigerians are increasingly vulnerable to mental health struggles, including depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts. The stigma surrounding mental health issues, coupled

with a lack of accessible services, has made it difficult for many young people to seek the help they need. Suicide, a tragic outcome of untreated mental illness, is an emerging concern that needs urgent attention.

Nigeria's Gen Z is contending with a range of mental health issues that stem from various social and economic pressures. Unemployment, academic stress, insecurity and poverty are daily realities for many young Nigerians. The sense of hopelessness that can arise from these challenges is exacerbated by societal expectations that push them to achieve success in a hostile environment.

Social media also plays a significant role in mental health struggles, with constant comparisons, cyberbullying and exposure to unattainable lifestyles creating feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. The pressures to conform to societal ideals of success and beauty are further driving rates of depression and anxiety among this demographic.

In Nigerian culture, mental health issues are often stigmatised and misunderstood.

Conversations about depression or suicidal thoughts are rarely taken seriously and individuals are often labeled as "weak" or "spiritually lacking." This stigma prevents many from seeking professional help, fearing judgment or rejection from family and friends.

Many young people turn to religious or spiritual leaders for support, which, while providing comfort, may not always offer the professional mental health care needed. Furthermore, the lack of education around mental health perpetuates the myth that depression and suicide are signs of moral or spiritual failure rather than medical conditions that require treatment.

Although precise data on suicide rates in Nigeria is difficult to come by due to underreporting and cultural taboos, anecdotal evidence and media reports suggest a disturbing rise in suicide among young Nigerians, particularly within Gen Z.

Suicidal thoughts are often linked to untreated mental health conditions and in many cases, young people feel they have no safe space to talk about their struggles.

The limited availability of mental health services and the high cost of accessing care are additional barriers. Nigeria has less than 250 practicing psychiatrists for a population of over 200 million and mental health services are often centralized in urban areas, leaving many in rural regions without access to necessary care.

Despite the grim situation, efforts are being made to address the mental health crisis and prevent suicide among Nigerian youth. NGOs and advocacy groups like Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative (MANI) and I Choose Life Foundation have been at the forefront of raising awareness about mental health issues, advocating for better policies to support mental wellness.

Additionally, there is a growing push for the Nigerian government to implement comprehensive mental health reforms. The Mental Health Bill, signed in 2023, seeks to provide a legal framework for mental health

services and protect the rights of people with mental illnesses. However, much more work needs to be done to ensure these policies are implemented effectively, especially for vulnerable groups like Gen Z.

Education and awareness campaigns are critical in addressing both mental health issues and suicide prevention. Gen Z, with their digital savvy, can be key players in breaking the silence and stigma around mental health. Online platforms and social media campaigns can provide safe spaces for young people to discuss their struggles, share resources and connect with mental health professionals.

The integration of mental health education into school curriculums can also help equip young Nigerians with the tools to recognize the signs of mental illness in themselves and others. Early intervention, open conversations and access to counseling services in schools and universities can be life-saving.

The mental health crisis facing Nigerian Gen Z is a growing concern that requires immediate attention. Addressing this crisis means not only breaking the stigma around mental health but also creating an environment where young people can access the care and support they need.

Suicide prevention efforts must be prioritized and this starts with open conversations, increased mental health resources and policy changes that make mental health care accessible and affordable. Only through collective action can we hope to turn the tide on this silent epidemic.



Samira Bello

# ENHANCING ORGANISATIONAL NARRATIVES WITH GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

HARRIET UZOKA



While generative AI has been around for some time, it gained significant public attention in 2022 with the release of the popular artificial intelligence chatbot, ChatGPT, which reached over 100 million users within two months.

Since then, generative AI has become a crucial element in communication strategies for organizations and brands across various fields.

Businesses and entrepreneurs are actively exploring ways to leverage generative AI to create cohesive and compelling narratives that convey their identity, mission, vision, and values. In addition to enhancing

organizational narratives, generative AI also saves time and resources, enabling brands to compete in the fiercely competitive digital space by incorporating techniques that boost creativity, efficiency, and consistency.

While generative AI holds numerous creative possibilities, it also raises concerns such as ethical issues, lack of human-like creativity, bias, and inaccuracy. Some creatives worry that AI could be used to replicate their work, and they are seeking ways to protect themselves against this rapidly advancing technology.

Earlier this year, hundreds of music artists, including Billie Eilish, Nicki Minaj, Katy Perry, and Camila Cabello, signed an open letter urging digital music developers to “cease the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to infringe upon and devalue the rights of human artists.”

However, progressive communication enthusiasts who view generative AI as an enabler are continually learning how to utilize it to assist their creative process. They stay informed on emerging ethical guidelines and transparency issues related to AI usage, maximizing its potential while avoiding pitfalls. They are curious to explore AI's positive possibilities and the various ways it can be leveraged to ideate, plan, and amplify creative communication goals.

Some companies and for-profit organizations have the resources and budget to generate personalized, data-driven brand narratives and may prefer to avoid the uncertainties of an AI tool that is still evolving.

However, for organizations with limited funding, sponsorships, or grants, generative AI offers a cost-effective solution for curating engaging content that promotes adopted narratives, fosters memorable interactions, and enhances top-of-mind awareness among target audiences.

With the right text prompts, generative AI can produce engaging, relevant, and relatable content in various formats, including audio, video, written content, and images, all aligned with adopted content plans.

The digital space remains a fertile ground for brand visibility, housing a vast audience, especially on social media, and offering a dynamic platform for bold brand storytelling.

However, the digital space also suffers from information overload, and many entities struggle to curate enough content to achieve significant visibility.

To ensure organisations do not fall behind in sharing their narratives across different platforms, AI can be leveraged to create diverse content styles and formats that communicate an organisation's values. Content elements like relatability, humour, and freshness boost engagement and reach, helping businesses achieve top-of-mind awareness. AI-generated content that aligns with current trends and topics is another effective way to push brand narratives.

Through social listening, brands can stay informed about relevant topics, and generative AI can be utilized to create content that aligns with these trends, promoting reach and influencing target audiences.

Beyond the quest for visibility in the competitive digital space, organizations and entrepreneurs can amplify their branding objectives using generative AI.

Incorporating generative AI into content strategies significantly increases the production of diverse branding content resources that can be iterated and shared across different platforms.

Exceptional branding is achieved when target audiences and the general public can connect a specific identity and feeling to a product or service. By inputting valuable insights about a brand's essence—such as tone, colour, and style—into generative AI, branding objectives are promoted.

Storytelling, a powerful branding tool, can be enhanced with generative AI to generate tailored stories where messages, visual elements, preferences, and behaviours align with established branding goals.

Emotional connections through storytelling can also be channelled using generative AI, infusing intentional targets and narratives into stories that resonate with the target audience on a deeper level.

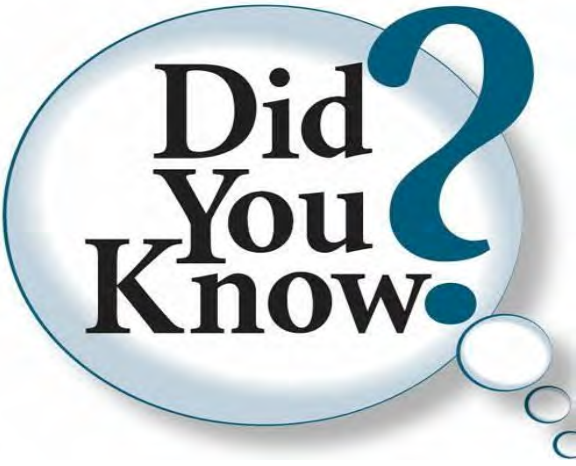
AI has emerged as a revolutionary tool, one that forward-thinking organizations and entrepreneurs are exploring and adopting to generate content resources that align with and promote their organizational narratives.

While AI is not without its concerns or lingering apprehension within the creative space, it remains a digital innovation that cannot be ignored by anyone aiming to stay ahead of new innovations. By studying and researching the myriad possibilities, organizations can effectively incorporate this technology into their communication strategies and achieve their organizational goals.

*Harriet Uzoka is an AI Content Strategist*

# DID YOU KNOW?: 10 RANDOM FOOD FACTS

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



Did  
You  
Know?

**F**ood is full of surprises, and the more you learn, the more you realize how fascinating the things we eat every day can be.

Here are ten random food facts that might just blow your mind.

**The color of a bell pepper does not indicate a different plant?**

Green, yellow, orange, and red bell peppers often come from the same plant, with the different colours simply representing various stages of ripeness. Green peppers are the least ripe and have a more bitter taste, while red peppers are fully ripe and sweeter. investment from Marcus Lemonis and Gayle King in 2021.



**The most expensive coffee in the world comes from cat droppings?**

Kopi Luwak, also known as civet coffee, is made from coffee beans that have been eaten and excreted by a civet, a cat-like mammal. The beans ferment as they pass through the civet's digestive system, which is said to give the coffee its unique flavour. It is one of the most expensive coffees in the world, with some varieties costing hundreds of pounds per kilo.



**Potato chips were invented out of spite**

The story goes that potato chips were invented by a chef named George Crum in 1853. A customer at his restaurant kept sending back his fried potatoes, complaining they were too thick. In frustration, Crum sliced the potatoes as thin as possible, fried them until they were hard, and added extra salt. To his surprise, the customer loved them, and potato chips were born.



## Chocolate was once used as currency

The ancient Aztecs valued cacao beans so highly that they used them as a form of currency. They believed chocolate was a gift from the gods, and it was so precious that they used cacao beans as currency to buy food and other goods



## Honey never spoils

Honey is one of the only foods that never goes bad. Archaeologists have found pots of honey in ancient Egyptian tombs that are over 3,000 years old and still perfectly edible. The secret lies in honey's natural antibacterial properties and low moisture content, which prevents bacteria from growing. However, proper storage is required.



## Apples float because they are 25% air

Ever wondered why apples float when you dunk them in water? It is because about 25% of an apple's volume is air. This is because when an item is more dense than

water it will sink, if it is less dense it will float. Apples are less dense than water, so they float.



## Ketchup was used as medicine?

In the 19th century, ketchup was sold as a cure for indigestion and other ailments. The idea was first proposed by Dr. John Cook Bennett, an American physician, in 1834, who is said to sell the recipe later in form of 'tomato pills'. He claimed that tomatoes had medicinal properties, and he created a tomato-based ketchup that was marketed as a health tonic.





## The world's largest pizza was over 13,500 square feet

The largest pizza ever made was prepared in Los Angeles, California, USA, in 2023. It was gluten-free and measured 13,957.77 square feet (1,296.72 square metres). The ingredients for this pizza included 6,193 kilograms (13,653 pounds) of dough, 2,244 kilograms (4,948 pounds) of sweet marinara sauce, 3,992 kilograms (8,800 pounds) of cheese and roughly 630,496 pepperoni slices. The pizza was named "Ottavia".

## Pineapples take up to three years to grow

Pineapples are a tropical treat, but they are also one of the slowest-growing fruits. From the time they are planted to the moment they are ready to be harvested, it can take anywhere from 18 to 36 months.



## Cheese is the most stolen food in the world

Studies have shown that cheese is the most stolen food item globally, with around 4% of the world's cheese supply going missing each year.



# HOW TO AVOID REMOTE JOB SCAMS: 10 RED FLAGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

**ESTHER EMOEKPERE**



**W**ith the growing popularity of remote jobs, there has also been an increase in scams targeting job seekers. While the allure of flexible hours and working from home is attractive, it is crucial to exercise caution when searching for remote opportunities. Scammers often create fake job adverts to trick people into giving up personal information or paying upfront fees.

## Common red flags of remote job scams include:

### Payment requests

Any job that asks for money upfront is a major red flag. Legitimate employers will never require you to pay for the job. Scammers often claim these payments are necessary for background checks or onboarding, but this is simply a tactic to steal your money.

### Unrealistic salaries for simple tasks

Be cautious of jobs offering unusually high pay for very basic work. If a position promises you can earn thousands per week for simple tasks it is likely a scam. Scammers use inflated salaries to attract vulnerable job seekers.

### Unclear or poorly written job descriptions

Job adverts filled with vague details, spelling mistakes, or grammatical errors are major red flags. Legitimate companies invest time in crafting clear, professional job descriptions that outline specific duties and qualifications. If a job posting lacks clarity or seems unprofessional, it often means the company itself is disorganised or unsure of what they need, which can lead to confusion and frustration later on.

### No interview process

A legitimate employer will always conduct an interview or some form of screening before hiring. If a company offers you a job without an interview or after a quick chat on platforms like WhatsApp or Telegram, it is likely a scam.

### Requests for personal information

Scammers may ask for sensitive details such as your bank account information, National Insurance number, or a copy of your ID early in the hiring process. A legitimate employer will only request this information after you have officially been hired and for specific onboarding purposes.

### Suspicious Email domains

Pay close attention to the email addresses used by recruiters. A professional company will usually have corporate email addresses (e.g., @companyname.com). If someone contacts you from a free email service (e.g., @gmail.com or @yahoo.com) claiming to represent a well-known company, it is a warning sign.

### Pressure to make a quick decision

Scammers often create a false sense of urgency to prevent you from thoroughly researching the opportunity. If you are being rushed to accept a job offer or sign a contract without the chance to review it, take a step back.

### Lack of company information

A legitimate company should have a well-established online presence, including a professional website and active social media profiles. If you can not find much about the company or its operations, it is a major red flag. Be particularly cautious of companies with incomplete websites or vague information, as these could indicate a scam or businesses seeking cheap labour.

### Absence of salary details

Be wary of remote jobs that do not specify pay. A clear salary structure, whether weekly or monthly, should always be provided. Some employers leave this out to compare candidates' offers, but this can leave you at a disadvantage. If salary is not mentioned, research typical pay for similar roles to ensure you are not being underpaid.

### Unusual payment systems

Avoid jobs that require you to use unfamiliar or unconventional payment methods. Established freelance platforms like PayPal or Payeroneer offer secure and reliable payment processes. If an employer insists on using a strange payment system, it is a major warning sign. Reputable employers should pay you a consistent salary through standard, legal channels.

# 10 HOUSEPLANTS THAT HELP KEEP MOSQUITOES AWAY

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



**M**osquitoes are more than just a nuisance, they can pose serious health risks by transmitting diseases such as malaria, West Nile, dengue, and Zika. According to the World Health Organization's (WHO) 2023 World Malaria Report, there were an estimated 249 million malaria cases globally in 2022, marking an increase of 5 million compared to 2021. The rise in malaria cases has been particularly significant in countries such as Pakistan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Uganda, and Papua New Guinea. As malaria cases continue to climb, especially in regions like Africa, finding effective ways to repel mosquitoes is increasingly important. While chemical repellents are effective, many people seek natural alternatives to keep these insects at bay. Fortunately, certain house plants not only beautify your home but also help to deter mosquitoes.

Here are some of the best mosquito-repelling house plants you can easily incorporate into your living space.

## Citronella (*Cymbopogon nardus*)

Citronella is perhaps the most well-known plant for repelling mosquitoes, thanks to its strong lemony scent, which these pests find unpleasant. However, it is important to distinguish between citronella and lemongrass, as they are often confused due to their similar appearance. While both belong to the same plant family, citronella has wider, deep green, blade-like

leaves and features a strong fragrance and taste, but it is not edible. In contrast, lemongrass has narrower, light green leaves with a mild lemony scent and taste and is commonly used in cooking.

Citronella is often used in candles and sprays, but having the plant itself can provide continuous mosquito deterrence. This grass-like plant thrives in bright, filtered sunlight, frequent watering and can be grown in pots or garden beds.



## Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)

Lemon balm, an aromatic herb of the mint family, Lamiaceae, is usually grown for its lemon-scented fragrant leaves. This plant is not only easy to grow but also benefits from regular trimming, which encourages new growth. These fresh leaves are particularly fragrant and can enhance the plant's ability to deter mosquitoes and other insects. Lemon balm thrives in partial shade and requires regular watering, making it an excellent choice for indoor pots or garden beds. Additionally, its leaves can be used in teas and as a garnish in various dishes, offering both practical and culinary benefits.



### Lavender (*Lavandula* spp.)

Lavender is a beautiful plant with a calming fragrance that many people love, but mosquitoes find it unpleasant. This plant thrives in bright, direct sunlight, so placing it near a window will help it thrive. Lavender needs well-drained soil and should be watered about twice a week, depending on how dry the soil gets. Besides its mosquito-repelling benefits, lavender adds a pleasant fragrance to your home and can be used in cooking, teas, or as a component in beauty products. Its beautiful purple blooms and soothing scent make it a beautiful addition to any indoor space.



### Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*)

Catnip is famous for driving cats wild, but it also has a lesser-known benefit, repelling mosquitoes. Research shows that catnip can be up to 10 times more effective than DEET, a common chemical used in insect repellents. Catnip is incredibly versatile, thriving in both sunny and shaded areas and adapting to nearly any type of well-draining soil.



### Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)

Rosemary is a fragrant herb that is commonly used in cooking, but it also doubles as a mosquito repellent. This plant does best in full sunlight, warm and well-drained environment. It can be grown in pots on your windowsill or directly in your garden. In addition to its mosquito-repelling properties, rosemary is commonly used as a spice in various dishes, and it adds fragrance to soaps and cosmetics. Traditionally, rosemary has also been used for its medicinal properties to improve memory.



### Marigolds (*Tagetes* spp.)

Marigolds are vibrant flowers that contain a compound called pyrethrum, which is commonly found in insect repellents. The scent of marigolds is unpleasant to mosquitoes, making them a great addition to your home or garden. Marigolds prefer full sun and well-drained soil, and they can be grown in pots indoors or outdoors.



## Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*)

Peppermint is another herb with a strong scent that mosquitoes dislike. The menthol in peppermint leaves not only repels mosquitoes but also provides relief if you happen to get bitten. Peppermint is easy to grow indoors, just ensure it gets plenty of sunlight. It is a versatile plant that can be used in teas, desserts, and even as a refreshing addition to your water. To prevent it from spreading uncontrollably in your garden, it's best to grow peppermint in its own pot.



## Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)

Sage is another herb that is useful for repelling mosquitoes. When burned, sage releases a fragrant smoke that mosquitoes find repulsive. It is an excellent plant to keep indoors and can be used fresh or dried in your cooking. Sage grows best in bright light and well-drained soil, making it low-maintenance.



## Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)

asil is a common culinary herb that also has mosquito-repelling properties. Basil needs full sunlight and moist well-drained soil. Besides keeping mosquitoes at bay, having basil on hand is convenient for adding fresh flavour to your cooking. Basil with its anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory, and antioxidant has been used in traditional medicine for the treatment of respiratory disorders.



## Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.)

Eucalyptus is known for its distinctive menthol-like fragrance, which is a powerful mosquito deterrent. While it is often used in essential oils and candles, having the plant itself can provide continuous protection against mosquitoes. Eucalyptus plants prefer bright, indirect sunlight and can be grown indoors in large pots.



# FROM SELLING PERSONAL PROPERTIES TO BUILDING LUXURY HOMES: THE UNTOLD STORY OF AYOBAMI AKINDIPE

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA





**A**yobami Akindipe, Ace Real Estate founder and Chief Executive Officer, who in the early days of the company sold personal properties to commit fully to developing the Ace brand has recounted the successes for four years and counting.

As the organisation under Akindipe celebrates four years of creating beautiful home and property memories for many Nigerians across all strata, it says it remains even more committed to upholding the trust and satisfaction of all existing and potential investors.

There are hundreds of unsatisfactory stories in the real estate industry in Nigeria. From the outrageous about 28 million housing deficits for Nigerians to below-standards property delivery to outright swindling people out of their hard-earned money and non-delivery of property, the list goes on. In the past four years, Ayobami Akindipe through Ace Real Estate has come on board to change the narrative.

Striving on integrity and astute customer satisfaction, Ace Real Estate from the onset built a legacy of sincerity which continues to make the brand attractive to worthy investors.

From predominantly land sales and management services, the real estate company in just four years have evolved to becoming home construction champions putting smiles to the faces of many Nigerian families and individuals.

Akindipe, the CEO said aside affordable luxury homes, Ace Real Estate also provides land ownership opportunities in different locations in Lagos.

"Ace City, Prime City, Crystal City, Vision City and Domaine City are some of Ace's properties that have given several Nigerians the title, landowners. The growth and grandeur operations of Ace Real Estate from predominantly land sellers to the creation of beautiful, affordable luxury home memories is the authentication of the mission, resilience, sacrifices and sincerity of purpose of Ace Real estate

"As a community-driven organisation that is not purely focused on profit, Ace Real Estate in 2022 established Ace Academy, a corporate social responsibility arm charged with the responsibility of providing free training and mentorship for youth across Nigeria to gain realtors skills for onward entrepreneurship or optional income stream.

"In two years of Ace Academy, about 20,000 Nigerians have passed through the intensive, yet rewarding realtors free training with certificate of completion armed to contribute to the workforce and economy of Nigeria. Specifically, Ace Real Estate employs about 54 people directly in its various office, field and ancillary operations while over 2,000 persons benefit are indirectly employed," the CEO disclosed.

Speaking on its latest project, Akindipe, stated that Ace's latest project, Two3Four Residence located few meters from the popular Freedom Way in Lekki Phase 1, Lagos is a testament to the vision and continuous giant strides of the company. 42 opulent and smart apartments designed in one and two all ensuite bedrooms, clock-round security and power, a central water treatment plant and spacious ground floor parking among many others are some of its features.

Prior to Two3Four Residence, the CEO said the Ace double projects; Number 31 located in Ikate-Lekki and 78 Residence located at the prestigious Victoria Garden City both in Lagos are all sold-out properties that are set to be delivered to investors as scheduled by September this year.

Both the Number 31 and 78 Residence projects have a combined 38 apartments while the newest 42-apartment Two3Four Residence showcase the growing opportunities of investing with Ace Real Estate.

# 5 KIDPRENEURS WHO SAW A NEED AND BUILT SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES

**ESTHER EMOEKPERE**



Some of the most inspiring success stories come from kidpreneurs who, despite their age, had a vision and the drive to make it a reality. These young founders identified gaps and opportunities, using their creativity and determination to build successful enterprises from scratch. Their journeys demonstrate how a keen sense of need and youthful determination can lead to remarkable achievements.

Here are 5 companies started by kids who recognised a need and took action to turn their ideas into successful companies.

## Miracle Olatunji — OpportuniMe

Miracle Olatunji launched OpportuniMe in high school to help her peers discover career opportunities and build networks before they even set foot in university. Motivated by her experience in The Diamond Challenge, an entrepreneurship programme that opened her eyes to endless possibilities, Olatunji has since expanded her venture and pursued various passions. She offers coaching, consulting, and brand partnerships, and is a sought-after keynote speaker. She is also the author of *Purpose: How to Live and Lead with Impact*, and her work has been featured in the Boston Business Journal's 25 under 25 list and Forbes.



## Gabby Goodwin — GaBBy Bows

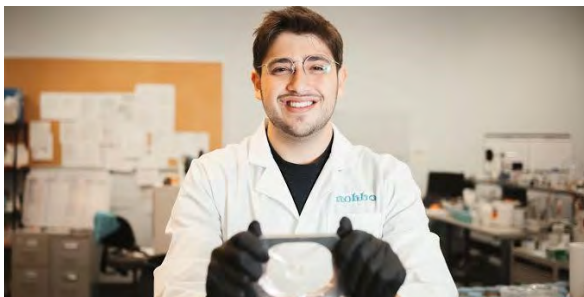
At just seven years old, Gabby Goodwin, along with her mother Rozalynn, addressed a common problem: hair barrettes that would not stay in place. After numerous lost barrettes and frustrated mornings, they created the Double-Face Double-Snap Barrette, which stays put all day. Gabby's innovation led to the founding of GaBBy Bows in 2014. The company, which now holds three patents, offers barrettes in 15 colours and three designs, and has sold over a million units across the US and 15 countries. Gabby's entrepreneurial spirit does not stop there, she also launched Confidence by GaBBy, a line of plant-based hair care products,

and the Mommy and Me Entrepreneurship Academy, mentoring young girls and their mothers. Her story has been featured on major media platforms, and she has received numerous accolades, including the 2015 South Carolina Young Entrepreneur of the Year award and a \$200,000 investment from Marcus Lemonis and Gayle King in 2021.



### Benjamin Stern — Nohbo

Inspired by the harmful effects of plastic on the environment, Benjamin Stern created Nohbo during a high school biology class in Melbourne, Florida. His frustration with plastic waste led him to develop Nohbo Drops, innovative single-use, water-soluble packets for personal care products, such as shampoo and body wash, that eliminate the need for plastic packaging. These packets, which are free from harsh chemicals, parabens, and sulfates, were born out of Stern's desire to make a real difference. After pitching his idea on Shark Tank and securing a deal with Mark Cuban, Stern's passion for sustainability drove him to build a team and turn Nohbo into an award-winning startup. With partnerships with organisations like Capital One and 4 Ocean, Stern remains committed to finding new ways to tackle plastic pollution.



### Mo'iah Bridges — Mo's Bows

At just nine years old, Mo'iah Bridges launched Mo's Bows in his grandmother's kitchen, driven by a desire for a stylish fashion accessory that suited his personality.



What began as a quest for the perfect bow tie quickly grew into a thriving business producing vibrant, handmade bow ties, neckties, pocket squares, and apparel. Based in Memphis, Tennessee, Mo's Bows has earned international recognition, with features on major networks like The Steve Harvey Show, Good Morning America, and Shark Tank. Mo'iah's entrepreneurial spirit has also led him to author a children's book, Mo's Bows: A Young Person's Guide to Startup Success, to inspire other young aspiring business owners. In 2014, Mo'iah was honoured by the Tennessee State Museum Costume and Textile Institute and has since made significant strides in fashion, including serving as a fashion correspondent for the 2015 NBA Draft and being named to Time's "30 Most Influential Teens" list. His encounter with President Barack Obama at the White House Demo Day and his partnership with the NBA to create custom ties for all 30 teams highlight his growing influence in the industry.

### Aline Morse — Zolli Candy

Seven years old Alina Morse's visit to the bank with her father sparked an idea when she declined a lollipop offered by the teller, fearing it would harm her teeth. This moment inspired her to create Zollipops, a lollipop that is not only delicious but also good for dental health. After two years of research and numerous trials, she and her father developed a successful formula and secured their first retail placement with Whole Foods Market in 2014. The company quickly gained traction, with sales doubling each year and expanding to major retailers like Kroger. By 2018, Zollipops became Amazon's best-selling sugar-free candy and lollipops. Now a teenager and CEO of Zolli Candy, she also leads the Million Smiles Initiative, donating Zollipops to schools to promote dental hygiene.



# NOSIRU SONOIKI: ENTREPRENEUR CHAMPIONING EMPOWERMENT FOR SMALL, MEDIUM BUSINESSES IN NIGERIA



**N**osiru Sonoiki, Chief Operating Officer at Paybox360, Nigeria's leading small and medium businesses (SMBs) solutions provider is one individual that is at the forefront of ensuring SMBs across Nigeria are fully empowered in order to uplift the country's economy.

For the past five years and counting, Nosiru in various capacities have been championing solutions that are carefully designed to make business operations and growth easily attainable for SMBs across Nigeria and beyond.

Whether the business solutions are in the areas of financial prudence, human resource innovation, sales acceleration, ease of payments, health and general insurance for workforce and more, Sonoiki has extensive experiences allowing SMBs to target measurable growth and development.

Most recently, Sonoiki was accepted into the exclusive advisory council membership of the Harvard Business Review (HBR), United States of America based global online research community where members have the opportunity to share their views and opinions with peers and the staff of HBR through participation in research.

He will also have the opportunity to weigh in on current business topics and issues and share in research findings, previews of new content and future product developments through his expertise as a business manager and SMBs growth accelerator.

As the Chief Operating Officer of Liberty Assured Group, a conglomerate of many thriving businesses including Paybox360, LibertyPay, getLinked, Liberty Life and more, Nosiru is overseeing a handful of services and products that are currently revolutionizing the operations and efficiency of SMBs across Nigeria and beyond.

Firstly, with over 100 merchants onboarded in the first quarter of its fiscal year, Paybox360 is proving to be the go-to solution for businesses looking to optimize key functions such as inventory management, spend control, and HR operations.

With a visionary leadership team led by Sonoiki, a fast-growing user base, and a roadmap for international expansion, Paybox360 is set to become a global leader in business management solutions.

The company's focus on solving real business challenges through innovation ensures that Paybox360 will continue to deliver value to businesses worldwide.

LibertyPay is a digital and payment solution institution that is led by Individuals with a passion to bridge the divide in every economic sphere bringing financial liberty and freedom by filling the payments void within the business sectors in areas with limited internet or reliable electricity ranging from nano-micro businesses to SMBs and personal finances. In the past two years under the operational management of Sonoiki, LibertyPay have executed over three billion naira transactions.

From generating an idea to building human resource solutions that would eventually transform into a successful tech start-up business from Nigeria to the world, getLinked.ai, Nigeria's pioneer artificial intelligence powered platform is supporting startups to succeed. This platform presents incredible opportunities for techies to scale their ideas from obscurity to global acclaim.

In ensuring a healthy workforce and the general populace at large, Liberty Life's micro insurance plan is for everyone, especially those excluded from the insurance conversation.

The organisation prides itself in being accessible to all Nigerians. Liberty Life is setting new standards for health insurance in Nigeria. Their approach is technology-driven, with easy USSD-based enrolment, and their customer-first strategy ensures that their plans meet real needs.

Nosiru Sonoiki, a passionate professional championing the growth of SMBs in Nigeria holds a Masters of Science and Bachelor of Science degrees in management and business administration respectively from the University of Lagos.

# BUILDMACEX EXPO: OMOLOLA HUNKUTEN ADVOCATES FOR INNOVATIONS TO TACKLE HOUSING CHALLENGES

CHINWE MICHAEL



**O**molola Hunkuten, head of projects at Spazio Ideale, has said there is a need for modern methods and affordability in unlocking sustainable and accessible housing opportunities.

This was disclosed during her keynote address at the Building, Construction, and Machinery Expo (Buildmacex) 2024.

Speaking on "Addressing Affordable Housing Challenges through Reforms in the Construction Industry" on September 6, 2024, Hunkuten stressed the importance of embracing innovation and technology to address the growing demand for housing.

She also discussed Spazio Ideale's approach to designing tech-enabled furniture for home comfort, showcasing the company's commitment to sustainable and accessible living solutions.

The event brought together thought leaders in the architecture, building, and construction industries, providing a platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Hunkuten's address was well-received by attendees, who praised her insightful perspectives on affordable

housing and innovative construction solutions.

Hunkuten, a seasoned Project Management professional with a strong background in Building Technology, emphasized the critical role of the construction industry in providing affordable housing solutions.

She highlighted the need for innovative approaches, such as prefabrication, modular construction, and sustainable materials, to reduce construction costs and increase efficiency.

Hunkuten also called for government reforms to address regulatory hurdles, improve access to financing, and streamline land acquisition processes. She emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships and

government incentives to encourage investment in affordable housing projects.

In her speech, Hunkuten shared case studies of successful affordable housing initiatives both in Nigeria and internationally, highlighting the potential for significant impact through effective policies and implementation.

One of the case studies she discussed was the Edo State Affordable Housing Project, which has successfully added housing units to the market, easing the housing deficit in the region.

She also highlighted the N15 Billion Housing Project in Lagos and the Federal Government's Social Housing Scheme as examples of successful initiatives in Nigeria.

Internationally, Hunkuten referenced the Housing and Development Board (HDB) in Singapore, the Swedish Social Housing Model, and the German Social Housing and Housing Allowances program as examples of effective affordable housing initiatives.

# NFL'S TOP 10 HIGHEST-PAID PLAYERS SET TO COLLECT \$644 MILLION IN 2024

CHISOM MICHAEL



In the National Football League (NFL) competitive landscape, player earnings reflect their on-field performance and off-field ventures. For 2024, the top-earning players have set new financial benchmarks with impressive contracts and lucrative endorsements.

An NFL offseason saw a record \$12.4 billion in new contracts, surpassing the previous high by \$2 billion in 2022, with average annual contract values at a record 13 positions.

The top 10 earners are projected to collect \$644 million combined in the 2024 league year, exceeding

last year's record of \$508 million. This total is more than double the \$296 million earned by the top 10 in 2017, with the cutoff rising to \$47 million, up 15% from the \$41 million in 2023.

For the third consecutive year, at least nine quarterbacks make the list, continuing a trend of at least seven quarterbacks since 2018.

According to Forbes, here are the top 10 NFL's highest-paid players

## Jared Goff — \$85.6 million

Age 29, Quarterback for the Detroit Lions, Goff earned \$80.6 million on-field and \$5 million off-field, securing a four-year, \$212 million extension in May with \$170 million in guarantees and a no-trade clause; his \$73 million signing bonus was an NFL record for two months until Jordan Love surpassed it, and he has endorsement deals with Ford, Old Spice, and Jared Jewellers, while in 2023, he purchased homes in Manhattan Beach for \$10.5 million and \$8.6 million.



## Patrick Mahomes — \$81 million

Age 28, Quarterback for the Kansas City Chiefs, Mahomes earned \$56 million on-field and \$25 million off-field; he holds the largest contract in NFL history with a 10-year, \$450 million deal from 2020, though annual earnings have been surpassed by other quarterbacks, and he has endorsements with Prime Sports Drinks, launched Throne Sports Coffee, and was a producer on the Netflix docuseries Receiver.



## Jordan Love — \$80.5 million

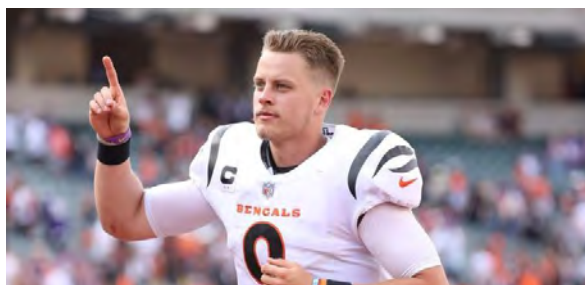
Age 25, Quarterback for the Green Bay Packers, Love earned \$79 million on-field and \$1.5 million off-field, signing a four-year, \$220 million contract in July after

a standout 2023 season; despite limited career starts, the Packers showed confidence in him, and his profile is rising with improved rankings in polls and surveys.



## Joe Burrow — \$69.7 million

Age 27, Quarterback for the Cincinnati Bengals, Burrow earned \$65.7 million on-field and \$4 million off-field, signing a five-year, \$275 million extension last September, including a \$55 million option bonus, and despite an injury-shortened season, he has made significant strides both on and off the field, including a new sponsorship with Alo Yoga.



## Justin Herbert — \$66.6 million

Age 26, Quarterback for the Los Angeles Chargers, Herbert earned \$56.6 million on-field and \$10 million off-field, signing a five-year, \$262.5 million contract with a \$50.6 million bonus, and has additional bonus money due in 2025; he set records for fastest 1,500 completions and most passing yards in the first four seasons, with endorsements from SoFi, TCL, and Dr. Squatch soap.



## Kirk Cousins — \$65 million

Age 36, Quarterback for the Atlanta Falcons, Cousins earned \$62.5 million on-field and \$2.5 million off-field, joining the Falcons with a four-year, \$180 million contract after six seasons with the Vikings; he remains focused on winning a Super Bowl despite a recent injury and competition from rookie Michael Penix Jr., and he has deals with brands like Mercedes-Benz and Truist bank.



## Travis Kelce — \$52 million

Age 34, Tight End for the Kansas City Chiefs, Kelce earned \$17 million on-field and \$35 million off-field; his off-field ventures include \$2.4 million from jersey sales, hosting a Prime Video game show, roles in TV and film, and signing new deals with A SHOC and General Mills, while he also signed a two-year, \$34.3 million extension with the Chiefs.



## Russell Wilson — \$49 million

Age 35, Quarterback for the Pittsburgh Steelers, Wilson earned \$39 million on-field and \$10 million off-field; released by the Broncos, he joined the Steelers on a veteran's-minimum contract, remains a team

captain, and has numerous endorsements including Bose and Gulfstream jets, plus co-founded the fashion brand House of LR&C with his wife, Ciara.



## Aaron Rodgers — \$47.2 million

Age 40, Quarterback for the New York Jets, Rodgers earned \$38.2 million on-field and \$9 million off-field; he restructured his contract to a fully guaranteed \$75 million for the next two years after a short-lived season due to an Achilles injury, pushing his career on-field earnings to over \$418 million, and continues earning from endorsements with ZenWtr and Amberjack dress shoes.



## Deshaun Watson — \$47 million

Age 28, Quarterback for the Cleveland Browns, Watson earned \$46 million on-field and \$1 million off-field; he is in Year 3 of a five-year, \$230 million fully guaranteed contract and agreed to a recent restructuring to lower the Browns' cap hit, with recent activities including a fast-food investment and a tour of Saudi Arabia, despite legal issues and an injury.



# FROM CULTURE TO COUTURE: AFRICAN ART'S GLOBAL FASHION INFLUENCE

Artistic Prints. Patterns. Vivid Colours



African art has long been a significant cultural force, shaping and inspiring a wide range of creative fields across the globe. The vivid colours, intricate patterns, and deep-rooted symbolisms inherent in African art have made their mark on global fashion and design in ways that are both profound and far-reaching.

From high-end fashion houses in Paris to streetwear brands in New York, African aesthetics have become a cornerstone of contemporary design. This influence is not a recent phenomenon but rather a rich, ongoing dialogue that has spanned centuries. Today, the global fashion industry continues to draw from Africa's vast artistic heritage. This has led to the creation of pieces that resonate with a modern audience while honouring ancient traditions.

Furthermore, the rise of African designers on the global stage has played a crucial role in this cultural exchange. Designers like Nigeria's Lisa Folawiyo, South Africa's Laduma Ngxokolo, and Senegal's Selly Raby Kane have garnered international acclaim for their unique interpretations of African art and culture. These designers blend traditional African aesthetics with contemporary design principles, creating pieces that are both innovative and deeply rooted in cultural heritage.

This digest explores the profound impact of African art on global fashion and design. We will also examine how traditional motifs, textiles, and craftsmanship have been reimagined and integrated into contemporary design practices.

**A Historical Perspective on African Art and Fashion**  
African art has a history that spans thousands of years. It is deeply intertwined with the continent's diverse cultures and traditions. Traditional African art forms, such as sculpture, beadwork, and textiles, have long been used to express cultural identity, religious beliefs, and social status. These art forms are characterised by their intricate designs, bold colours, and symbolic meanings. Each piece tells a story that reflects the values and experiences of the community from which it originates.

This digest is brought to you by Patrons MCAA. Think African art, think Patrons.

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In the early 20th century, European artists and designers began to take notice of African art, drawn to its abstract forms and vibrant aesthetics. This period, known as the Primitivism movement, saw artists like Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse incorporating African motifs and techniques into their work. This in turn influenced the broader art and design communities. However, it wasn't until the late 20th and early 21st centuries that African art began to be recognised as a significant influence on global fashion. As designers started to appreciate the depth and diversity of African cultures and the potential to incorporate these elements into their work.

## The Role of African Textiles in Global Fashion

One of the most significant contributions of African art to global fashion is through textiles. African textiles, such as Kente, Ankara, Adire (tie and dye), and Mudcloth, are renowned for their bold patterns, vibrant colours, and intricate designs. These textiles are not just beautiful; they carry deep cultural meanings, with each pattern and colour symbolising different aspects of life, from wealth and prosperity to spiritual protection.

In the fashion industry, these textiles have been embraced by designers who are eager to infuse their collections with the richness of African culture. Brands such as Stella Jean, Duro Olowu, and Vlisco have

made African textiles a central feature of their designs, creating garments that are not only visually stunning but also culturally significant. The use of African textiles in global fashion has also sparked a conversation about cultural appropriation and the importance of giving credit to the communities that have created these art forms. As a result, there is a growing movement within the fashion industry to collaborate with African artisans and support the sustainable production of these textiles.



An Adire-inspired Design from the Stella Jean Collection

## African Art Motifs in Contemporary Design

The influence of African art extends beyond textiles to include a wide range of motifs and symbols. These motifs and symbols have been incorporated into contemporary fashion and design. African art is rich with symbolism, with many motifs representing concepts such as fertility, protection, and community. These symbols have been reinterpreted by designers to create garments and accessories that carry a sense of meaning and purpose.

For example, the Adinkra symbols from Ghana, each representing a specific concept or proverb, have been incorporated into jewellery, clothing, and home decor. The use of these symbols not only adds a layer of

depth to the design but also connects the wearer or user to a broader cultural narrative. The “woke” culture might call these Aztec designs when visualised in black and white themes.



Adinkra Cloth

Similarly, the Maasai beading techniques from Kenya and Tanzania have been adopted by designers to create intricate jewellery and accessories that are both beautiful and meaningful.



Hand-made Kenya Maasai Bead Assorted Necklaces

## Global Impact of African Fashion Designers

African fashion designers are playing a crucial role in bringing African art to the global stage. Designers such as Ozwald Boateng, Maki Oh, and Lisa Folawiyo have gained international recognition for their work, which blends traditional African art with contemporary fashion trends. These designers are not only creating phenomenal collections but are also challenging stereotypes and changing the narrative around African fashion.

Their work highlights the diversity and sophistication of African art, showcasing it as a source of innovation and creativity. By incorporating traditional African elements into their designs, these designers are helping to redefine what is considered fashionable on a global scale. Their success has also paved the way for a new generation of African designers, who are using their work to explore and celebrate their cultural heritage.

## The Next Chapter: African Art Leading Global Fashion's Future

The influence of African art on global fashion and design will only grow stronger. As the industry embraces diversity, African art's bold colours, intricate patterns, and rich symbolism offer limitless creative inspiration for future designs.

The rise of sustainable fashion further highlights the value of preserving traditional art and supporting local artisans, aligning African art's craftsmanship and cultural significance with the movement toward meaningful, eco-conscious design.

African art's impact on global fashion and design is undeniable. Its bold prints, rich textures, and unique motifs shape contemporary styles and interiors. As global appreciation grows, it's vital to honour its cultural



Nigerian fashion designer, Lisa Folawiyo

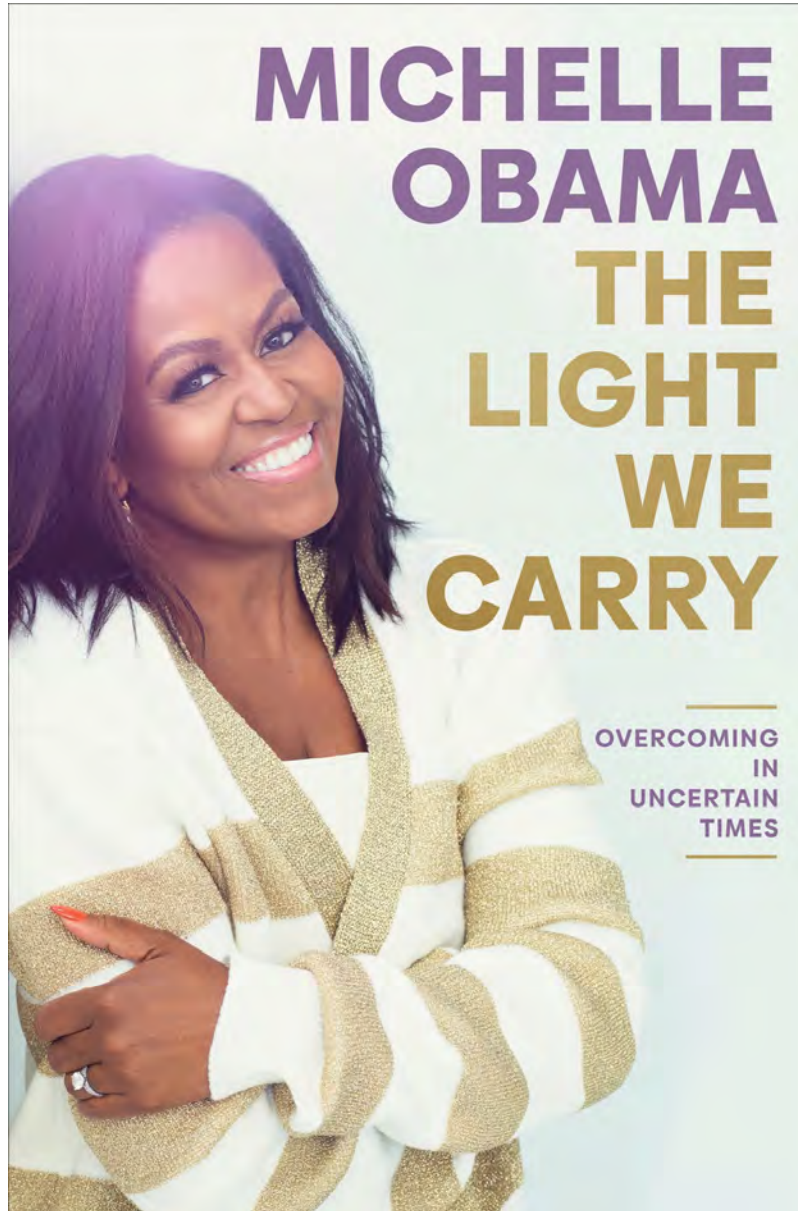
significance and commit to ethical practices in its commercialisation. This will ensure that African art thrives and inspires future generations.

*Keturah Ovio.*



### Keturah Ovio

Keturah Ovio is an Executive at Patrons Modern & Contemporary African Art. She is also an engineer and Founder of Dukka, a Fintech startup providing bookkeeping and payments solutions for small businesses. Keturah is passionate about African Art and has been collecting art since her early 20s. Now, she advises, curates, and manages collections for individuals and corporate organisations looking to start or diversify their wealth management through art collecting. She strongly believes that a fine marriage exists between Art and Technology.



## Ways to Make It through Tough Times -A Review of Michelle Obama's The Light We Carry

Title: The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Certain Times  
Author: Michelle Obama  
Year of Publication: 2022  
Number of Pages: 318  
Category: Self-Help

# The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Certain Times

TITILADE OYEMADE

**M**ichelle Obama, widely recognized as the former First Lady of the United States and the spouse of former President Barack Obama, is not just defined by her title. Her latest book, 'The Light We Carry,' mirrors her authenticity.

Similar to her earlier memoir 'Becoming,' 'The Light We Carry' maintains Michelle Obama's open and candid style when she shares her life experiences, including personal and family moments. Her willingness to unveil her journey, with both achievements and obstacles, makes her a genuine and relatable figure, a trait consistently seen in her writings.

While 'Becoming' was a memoir, 'The Light We Carry' is categorized as "self-help," allowing Michelle's down-to-earth nature to shine once again.

Within the pages of this book, readers are encouraged to explore essential themes like personal growth, resilience during challenging times, the intricacies of race

and gender, and the enduring significance of human connections.

Michelle Obama candidly shares life lessons from her journey, addressing trials and experiences, no matter how they affected her self-esteem. For women, this book is a valuable source of advice to return to.

A central theme in 'The Light We Carry' stresses the significance of not navigating life in solitude and underscores the value of nurturing friendships. It emphasizes the importance of seeking and accepting help, particularly for female readers, providing comfort and reassurance.

One distinctive aspect of the book is its simplicity in offering advice that may seem commonplace but carries profound importance. Michelle's humility and honesty in admitting that she doesn't have all the answers make the book relatable and appealing.

After reading it, you will not only feel motivated but also inspired to be more engaged in life.

## Titilade Oyemade

Titilade Oyemade is a business executive in a leading organisation and holds a degree in Russian Language. She's the convener of the Hangoutwithtee Ladies Event and the publisher of Hangoutwithtee magazine.

She spends her weekends attending women conferences, events and book readings. She loves to have fun and to help other women have the same in their lives.

Email: [titi.oyemade@gmail.com](mailto:titi.oyemade@gmail.com)

Social: [@tiipreeofficial](https://www.instagram.com/tiipreeofficial)



# WEEKENDER

## MOVIE REVIEWS

### SCREAM VI (2023)

For those of you who follow me weekly, you will know clearly that horror movies aren't my forte at all, but I lured into watching this, and I screamed from start to finish, although to some people it isn't scaring at all, but for me it was. Sam Carpenter shown up and had to protect herself and her sister from a weird faced masked guy who shows up with a knife and kills his victims, the movie shows they have some history together and that the guy is coming for vengeance against her and her friends. In other for them to survive and stay alive, they must stick together, without leaving each other sites, you will need to watch the entire movie to see if they all stayed alive and how they survived all the threats and hassles, wait till the very end, the revelation at the end will leave you in shock. The 122m horror, crime movie was directed by Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Tyler Gillett, they featured actors like Courteney Cox, Melissa Barrera, Jenna Ortega, Jasmin Savo Brown, Mason Gooding, Skeet Ulrich, Roger Jackson, Dermot Mulrony, Jack Champion, Josh Segarra, Liana Liberato e.t.c.



## MADAM WEB (2024)

For some weird reasons this movie reminded me of "Spiderman", those kind of movies with super hero powers, where people can predict the future and fly from one building to another, typical of most action, sci-fi movies. Cassandra Webb worked as a paramedic in New York city, she was really good at her job, but as time progressed she discovered that she had some unique powers to see into the future and reverse things in the present to influence the future outcome, along the line she met 3 girls with some unique powers, she had to protect them as a very terrible evil guy wanted them dead and would eliminate anything on his way that tried to stop him, including her. You will need to watch the entire movie to see how it ended for them all. The 116m action, adventure, Sci-fi, thriller movie was directed by S.J. Clarkson, they featured actors like Dakota Johnson, Sydney Sweeney, Isabela Merced, Celeste O'Connor, Tahar Rahim, Mike Epps, Emma Roberts, Adam Scott, Kerry Bishe, Zosia Mamet, Jose Maria Yazpik, Kathy-Ann Hart, Josh Drennen and many more.



## SERIOUSLY SINGLE (2020)

Looking for a nice funny, romantic movie, then this South African movie will make you smile. Dineo was frantically single and desperate to get married, she was willing to go to any length and do anything to become a bride. Dineo was tired of being single and her mother didn't make things any better for her as she kept reminding her of her terrible situation. Dineo had a friend she always went back to each time her boyfriends broke up with her, she was scared of living all by herself. One day she met this handsome, wealthy guy and she felt that all her problems were resolved and this was her final stop, little did she know that all that glitters weren't always gold. You will have to go check out this movie to find out if they got married after all, and how she was able to manage her life and choices. The 107m comedy, romance movie was directed by Katleho Ramaphakela, Rethabile Ramaphakela, they featured actors like Fulu Mugovhani, Thabo Malema, Tiffany Barbazano, Craig Jackson, Tumi Morake, Bohang Moeko, Onda Thomas, Mpho Osei Tutu e.t.c.



Linda Ochugbua

# WEEKEND QUOTES



1

I met a man with impaired vision and he said he desire to see the sky  
.....WhispersbyTEN

2

Giving yourself also means taking some burden off the shoulders of another.  
...WhispersbyTEN

3

Thoughtfulness is not always publicly displayed; it is also praying for another who may not have asked  
.... WhispersbyTEN

4

There is nothing called secret; once you tell or one person witnesses, it is already public  
..... WhispersbyTEN