

BUSINESS DAY WEEKENDER

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2026 World Cup: 10 Iconic Host Cities Every Fan Must Visit



AVIATION

Meet World's Longest-Serving Flight Attendant for 66yrs



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How Swiss Billionaire Heiress Nina Flohr is Reshaping African Eco-Tourism

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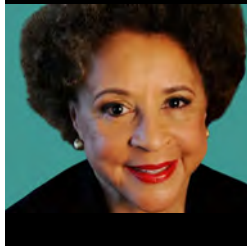
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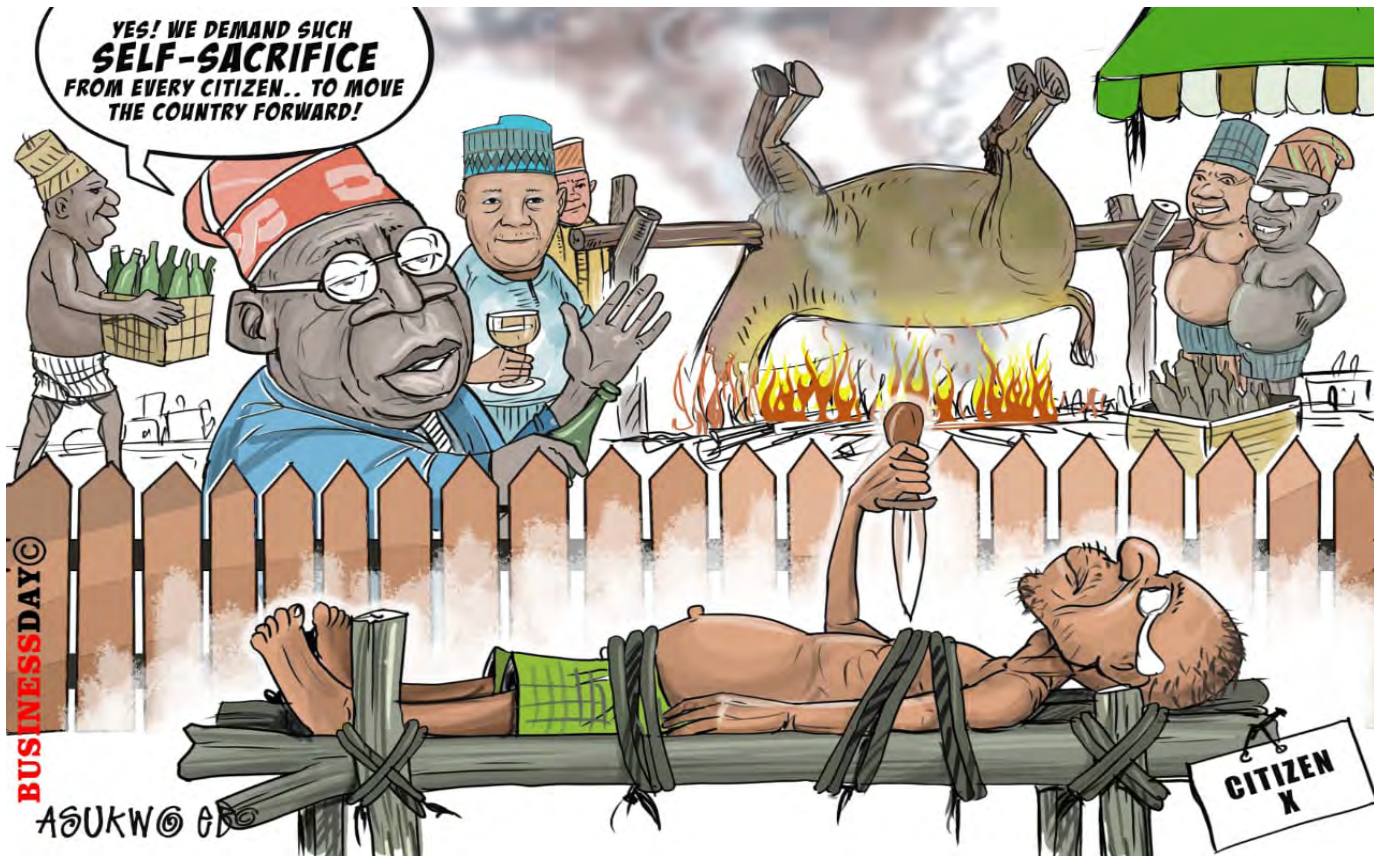




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2026 WORLD CUP: 10 ICONIC HOST CITIES EVERY FAN MUST VISIT

ANTHONY NLEBEM

With millions of football fans expected to descend on North America for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, the tournament promises not only a world-class football festival but also an unforgettable travel experience across some of the continent's most iconic destinations.

FIFA projects that more than five million supporters will attend matches during the expanded 48-team tournament, making it the most attended World Cup in history. The competition will feature 104 matches across 16 host cities in the United States, Canada and Mexico, eclipsing the attendance figures recorded at the 1994 World Cup in the United States.

From the historic opener in Mexico City to the grand finale in New York/New Jersey, fans will have countless opportunities to combine football with culture, entertainment and sightseeing.

Here are 10 host cities that should be on every World Cup travel itinerary:

Mexico City: Home of World Cup History
Mexico City will host the tournament's opening match and opening ceremony at the iconic Estadio Azteca, which will become the first stadium in history to host matches at three FIFA World Cups.

With its rich football heritage, world-renowned cuisine, vibrant nightlife and historic landmarks, Mexico City is expected to be one of the tournament's biggest attractions.



New York/New Jersey: The Ultimate World Cup Destination

The World Cup final will be staged at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, making the New York metropolitan area the focal point of the tournament.

For many supporters, witnessing the final is the ultimate football experience. The region offers iconic landmarks, world-class entertainment, shopping, dining and one of the most dynamic sporting atmospheres anywhere in the world.



Los Angeles: Where Football Meets Hollywood

Los Angeles is set to be one of the tournament's glamour destinations, with matches taking place at the state-of-the-art SoFi Stadium.

Beyond football, visitors can explore Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, Venice Beach and some of the world's most famous entertainment venues.



Miami: A Global Football Carnival

Miami is expected to deliver one of the most vibrant atmospheres of the tournament.

With matches at Hard Rock Stadium, the city combines football with beautiful beaches, nightlife, Latin American culture and an international fan base that creates a unique World Cup experience.



Toronto: Canada's Football Hub

Toronto will host matches at BMO Field and is expected to be one of Canada's most energetic World Cup destinations.

The city offers a blend of cultural diversity, modern attractions, excellent dining and a thriving sports scene that will make it a major gathering point for fans.



Vancouver: Football Meets Nature

For supporters seeking breathtaking scenery alongside football, Vancouver stands out.

Matches at BC Place will be complemented by spectacular mountain views, waterfront attractions, forests and outdoor adventures that make the city one of North America's most beautiful destinations.



Dallas: The Tournament's Busiest Hub

Dallas is expected to play a central role during the World Cup, hosting multiple matches at the massive AT&T Stadium.

Its strategic location, extensive transport network and growing football culture make it an ideal base for travelling supporters following multiple teams.



Atlanta: A Fan Favourite

Atlanta will welcome thousands of supporters to the ultra-modern Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

Known for its hospitality, entertainment scene and passionate sports culture, the city is expected to become one of the tournament's most popular fan destinations.

Guadalajara: Mexico's Football Heartland
Few cities breathe football quite like Guadalajara.

Home to Estadio Akron, the city offers a more traditional and authentic football experience, with passionate supporters and a deep-rooted football culture that makes every match feel special.





Monterrey: Football and Adventure Combined

Monterrey blends world-class football with stunning natural beauty.

The city's spectacular mountain backdrop and the modern Estadio BBVA provide a unique setting for World Cup action, making it an attractive destination for fans seeking both football and adventure.

A Record-Breaking Tournament Awaits

The 2026 FIFA World Cup is set to be the biggest football tournament ever staged, featuring 48 nations and 104 matches across three countries.

Beyond the action on the pitch, the tournament offers supporters a chance to experience some of North America's most exciting cities, creating a unique blend of sport, culture and travel.

Whether it is witnessing history at Estadio Azteca, attending the final in New York/New Jersey, or soaking up the atmosphere in Miami, Los Angeles, Toronto or Vancouver, the 2026 FIFA World Cup promises to be an unforgettable experience for football fans across the globe.



MEET WORLD'S LONGEST-SERVING FLIGHT ATTENDANT FOR 66YRS

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA

In an era where corporate downsizing, quick career changes, and sudden industry shakeups are standard, true career longevity is incredibly rare. Yet, for nearly seventy years, one legendary professional proved that passion and consistency could outlast any corporate merger.

Bette Nash, officially recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's longest-serving flight attendant, spent 66 years working at 30,000 feet. Her career was a living history book of modern air travel.

She began flying during the glamorous, piston-powered "Golden Age" of aviation with Eastern Airlines in 1957, survived the luxury deficits of the Trump Shuttle in the late 1980s, weathered the structural shifts at US Airways, and ultimately concluded her historic run as the ultimate matriarch of American Airlines.

"I'm the luckiest person in the world. I knew this job was for me from the moment I saw a TWA flight crew walk past me at Ronald Reagan National Airport when I was just 16 years old. It looked so elegant and romantic—it truly was the romance of the skies," Bette Nash.

The Charm School and the Weight Scales

Growing up in New Jersey, Nash was captivated by the sheer theater of mid-century commercial flight. When she entered the industry at age 21, the training pipeline felt more like an elite finishing school than an operational safety academy. Airlines heavily policed the personal presentation, posture, and social etiquette of their female staff.

In the late 1950s, flight attendants—then strictly called stewardesses—wore tailored royal blue suits, pillbox hats, and white gloves.



First-class travel was an opulent affair where passengers wore mink coats, lobster was served on fine china, and champagne was poured into real crystal.

However, this outward elegance masked a rigid corporate regime. The average career span for a stewardess in the 1950s was a brief two-and-a-half years. Airlines enforced harsh, discriminatory labor rules: flight attendants had to remain unmarried, could not become pregnant, faced arbitrary mandatory retirement by age 32, and were subjected to regular, strict weight checks.

.If a crew member gained a few pounds, they were instantly taken off the payroll. Nash successfully navigated these shifting labor standards, flying straight through to the modern era of workplace equity.

Balancing the 'Nash-Dash' with Family Devotion
As she accumulated historic levels of seniority, American Airlines granted Nash the contractual right to pick any premier international route she wanted. Instead of choosing easy, long-haul luxury flights to Paris or Tokyo, Nash intentionally chose the exhausting, high-frequency northeastern shuttle corridor between Washington D.C., Boston, and New York.

This strategic decision was fueled by profound personal devotion. Married to James Nash in 1973, Bette was the mother and primary caregiver for her son, Christian, who was born with Down's Syndrome. To ensure she could take care of her family every night, Nash created a relentless daily routine: waking up at 02:10 AM, driving to Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA), and working the intensive 06:00 AM commuter flights so she could return home in time for dinner.

On the northeast corridor, Nash became an absolute icon. Her quick turnaround flights became affectionately known to colleagues as the "Nash-Dash." Business travelers actively structured their weekly travel schedules specifically to fly with her. Weekly commuters noted that Nash didn't just execute safety protocols; she completely transformed the vibe of the cabin by remembering passengers' names, family updates, and conversations from weeks prior.

Surviving Corporate Turbulence

Over her 66-year career, Nash witnessed the volatile economic reality of American corporate history firsthand. In 1989, she was absorbed into the short-lived Trump Shuttle, an ambitious venture that spent over \$1,000,000 per aircraft adding gold fixtures, plush carpets, and marble sinks to its fleet.



When that operation folded under heavy losses and regulatory clashes, Nash transitioned into the US Airways network, which eventually merged into American Airlines in 2013. Through every corporate restructuring, budget cut, and technological overhaul, Nash's dedication never wavered.



When airline accountants eliminated free snacks from first class to cut costs, Nash simply went to Costco out of her own pocket to buy treats for her loyal regular fliers.

Even as the cabin transformed from "mink coats to flip-flops," Nash remained a consummate professional, easily passing her mandatory annual federal safety recertifications well into her eighties. For Nash, the aircraft cabin was never a workplace—it was her home, her social community, and a stage where she redefined the true meaning of service.



HOW SWISS BILLIONAIRE HEIRESS NINA FLOHR IS RESHAPING AFRICAN ECO-TOURISM

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA





Swiss billionaire heiress and Princess of Greece and Denmark, Nina Flohr, is quietly executing a radical transformation of African luxury tourism, shifting the paradigm from superficial hospitality to deep ecological stewardship.

Through her critically acclaimed Kisawa Sanctuary on Benguerra Island in Mozambique, Flohr has effectively merged high-end, futuristic

architectural design with rigorous marine science. In doing so, she is creating a highly sustainable, low-impact blueprint for ultra-luxury travel in emerging coastal markets.

High-Flyer to Environmental Innovator

Flohr's journey to the remote shores of East Africa is rooted in a lifetime spent navigating the upper echelons of global luxury. She is the daughter of Swiss billionaire Thomas Flohr, the founder of private aviation giant VistaJet, and Katharina Konečný, a founding editor of *Vogue Russia* and former creative director for Fabergé.

Before pivoting to African conservation, Flohr spent years sharpening her commercial eye as the Creative Director for VistaJet, where she orchestrated global branding concepts and led high-fashion corporate collaborations, including designing cabin crew uniforms with luxury skiwear brand Moncler.

Her global profile expanded further in 2021 when she married Prince Philippos of Greece and Denmark—the youngest son of the late King Constantine II and Queen Anne-Marie—officially granting her the title of HRH Princess Nina of Greece and Denmark.



Yet, rather than settling into a quiet life of European royalty, Flohr has channeled her pedigree, capital, and network into a massive 300-hectare coastal property in Mozambique to test a new model of philanthropic hospitality.

3D-Printed Infrastructure: The sanctuary features the world's first 3D-printed resort components. By blending sand-based 3D printing technology with indigenous mortar,

the resort minimized construction waste while respecting local structural forms.

Scientific Integration: Rather than treating conservation as a marketing tagline, the resort operates in tandem with the Bazaruto Center for Scientific Studies (BCSS)—a permanent, state-of-the-art marine field station and laboratory founded by Flohr.

Low-Impact Yield: Nestled within a fragile ecosystem, the property deliberately balances ultra-exclusive, low-capacity guest volumes with intense ecological preservation, leaving the vast majority of the landscape completely untouched.

New Class of Philanthropic Hospitality

What truly separates Flohr's Mozambican venture from traditional high-end African safaris is its structural connection to raw science. The luxury resort essentially operates as an economic engine that directly funds and feeds into the BCSS observatory.

On any given day, the resort's high-net-worth guests rub shoulders with international marine biologists using the island laboratory to track

regional whale migrations, map ocean floor habitats, and run telemetry on fragile coral reefs across the Bazaruto Archipelago.

By proving that a resort can actively co-exist with a world-class scientific research center, Nina Flohr is sending a clear message to the global travel industry: the future of true luxury lies in protecting the destination, not just consuming it.

FROM BANKING TO THE CLASSROOM: INSIDE BLOOMING GREENS SCHOOL'S 10-YEAR JOURNEY OF METRIC-DRIVEN EDUCATION





As Blooming Greens School, Yaba, Lagos marks its 10th Year Anniversary, Susan Babatunde-Yamah, the CEO in this interview with IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA, reflects on a decade of applying corporate discipline to education. From banking to the classroom, she's built a school designed to run on systems, measurable outcomes, and sustainable governance. Here's how the last 10 years have shaped that approach.

What core operational or risk-management principle from the banking sector did you find most missing in traditional school administration, and how did you implement it at Blooming Greens School, Yaba, Lagos?

In banking, every decision is tied to risk mapping, controls, and accountability. Over the last 10 years at Blooming Greens School, Yaba, Lagos, I found that most

schools operated without a formalized risk and operations framework – things like incident tracking, financial controls at department level, and standardized processes for quality assurance were often absent.

To mark our 10th year, I can say this shift has been foundational. We introduced a risk register and operational SOPs across academics, finance, and student welfare. Monthly reviews on academic performance variance, fee collection efficiency, and compliance checks now give us early warning signals. That move from reactive firefighting to proactive management is one of the biggest gains of our first decade.

How have you structured the administrative framework of Blooming Greens School, Yaba, Lagos to ensure it functions as a sustainable corporate entity rather than a personalized venture?

Sustainability comes from systems, not individuals, and that's been our focus as we celebrate 10 years in Yaba, Lagos. We built Blooming Greens around a clear governance and management separation: a Board of Governors for oversight, a defined executive management team, and documented delegation of authority. Each department – academics, operations, finance, HR – runs on KPIs and documented processes, not on personal directives. We've also invested in leadership succession by training middle managers to own units end-to-end. As we enter our second decade, the goal remains the same: if I step away tomorrow, the school's operations, culture, and standards continue without disruption.

With a PGD in Business Administration and an MBA in Marketing, how do you approach the “branding” and competitive positioning of Blooming Greens School, Yaba, Lagos in a highly saturated market like Lagos?

In Lagos, parents have options, so you can't compete on promises alone. Over 10 years in Yaba, we've positioned Blooming Greens on three pillars: technology-enabled learning, character development, and measurable academic outcomes.

For our 10th Year Anniversary, we're leaning into proof points from the last decade – student projects, exam results, alumni stories, and parent testimonials. We use data to segment parents and tailor messaging, whether it's STEM outcomes for tech-inclined families or pastoral care for those focused on holistic development. Branding here isn't the logo; it's the consistent experience parents and students have had with us for 10 years.



Many schools deploy technology as a marketing gimmick, but you emphasize technology-driven learning solutions at Blooming Greens School, Yaba, Lagos. How do you measure the actual return on investment [ROI] of edtech in terms of student cognitive development?

ROI on edtech has to be measured in learning outcomes, not device count. In our 10 years at Blooming Greens School, Yaba, Lagos, we've been deliberate about this. We track three things:

Cognitive gains: Pre- and post-assessments tied to specific digital tools measure improvement in critical thinking, problem-solving, and subject mastery.

Engagement and retention: Analytics from our learning platforms show time-on-task, completion rates, and concept mastery. Operational efficiency: We measure teacher time saved on grading and admin, and how that time is reinvested into personalized instruction.

If a platform doesn't move at least two of those three metrics after a pilot, we don't scale it. As we celebrate 10 years, the data shows this discipline has directly improved student outcomes and teacher productivity.

Can you speak on Curriculum innovation for AI, data & 'Future of Work' ?

The Future of Work is already here, so waiting till secondary school is too late. At Blooming Greens, we embed 'future skills' into foundational learning.

From primary school, our students do coding, design thinking, and data literacy — not as extracurriculars, but in core lessons. But tech alone isn't enough. We pair it with the 4Cs: _Critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication_ + strong values. Our goal is to have learners who can use technology as a tool, but still think ethically and solve Nigeria's problems.

That's how we align primary education with the future economy. Our students are intentionally exposed to industry experiences during their field trips.

How do you retain premium teaching talent amid 'Japa' wave ?

Japa' isn't just about salary. Teachers leave when there's no growth, no respect, and no purpose. So our retention strategy is 3-fold:

Professional growth: Every teacher has an Individual Development Plan. We encourage professional certifications such as TRCN, run in-house training with global partners, and create clear paths from classroom teacher □ HOD □ leadership. Culture + recognition: We build a culture where teachers are decision-makers, not just employees. We also offer performance bonuses, regular staff promotions and assistance even on personal financial obligations.



Can you speak on your structural / regulatory hurdles + 5-year expansion roadmap?

Competitive pay + wellbeing: We benchmark against top industry standards, not the market average.

We also support wellbeing — flexible schedules, HMOs, support internal staff welfare contributory schemes, etc. When teachers feel developed and valued, they stay. And they become our best recruitment channel.

How can inflationary pressures be managed without pricing out middle-class parents?

Inflation from diesel, FX, and learning materials is real. But a school that prices out its community will eventually empty.

Our approach is _efficiency + smart unbundling:

Operational efficiency: We digitize admin — fees, attendance, reports — to reduce paper and man-hours. Bulk procurement and vendor renegotiation also help.

Phased value: Core tuition covers quality teaching, facilities, and tech. Premium add-ons like clubs, foreign exams, etc are optional. Parents choose what fits their budget without the child missing core subjects.

Transparency: We explain cost drivers to parents and in advance. When they see value, they're more willing to stay and pay. The goal is premium quality with middle-class access. That's sustainable growth.

Scaling a premium school in Nigeria comes with real structural friction:

Regulatory overlap: You deal with LASG, UBEC, TRCN, NABTEB, and sometimes federal agencies. Approvals are slow and requirements sometimes conflict. We solve this with strong compliance and legal counsel from day one.

Land + infrastructure: Secure land title in Lagos is expensive and complex. Construction costs have doubled in 3 years but the good thing is that we own our property. We don't pay rent.

Capital: Banks rarely understand education as an asset class, so growth capital is limited.

Our 5-year roadmap for Blooming Greens:

Year 1-2: Consolidate: Double down on our tech + values positioning. Build our teacher training academy as a revenue stream.

Year 3-4: Replicate: Our nursery school now is a semi independent school with its management team. We will enhance its structure. The High School is also in place, growing in stature. The A Level School is about to be launched in collaboration with higher institutions within and outside the country using asset-light models and strategic partnerships

Year 5: Scale impact: Launch an edtech arm to export our curriculum and teacher training beyond our walls. The vision is to prove a Nigerian school brand can be world-class, profitable, and replicable. The hurdle is high, but the opportunity is bigger.

HOW AMERICA'S SECOND-RICHEST BLACK WOMAN TOOK \$400M FROM A DIVORCE AND BUILT A \$1.3BN EMPIRE

CHIOMA ONUH



Sheila Johnson co-founded one of America's most influential television networks, got almost none of the credit, and then used the settlement to build something entirely her own

In 2002, a Virginia judge dissolved Sheila Johnson's 33-year marriage to Robert Johnson, the man she had helped build Black Entertainment Television with from the basement of their Washington home. She walked out with \$400 million, her share of the \$3 billion that Viacom had paid for BET the year before. Most people in her position would have invested quietly and let compound interest do its work.

Sheila Johnson looked at \$400 million and saw a starting point.

Twenty-four years later, Forbes puts her net worth at \$1.3 billion, ranking her the second-wealthiest Black woman in America behind Oprah Winfrey. She is the only African American woman in history to hold principal ownership stakes in three major professional sports franchises at the same time. She built a luxury hotel group from scratch in a sector where Black women rarely get the financing, the regulatory goodwill, or the five-star ratings. She did all of it after fifty, after divorce, and, in early 2026, after the death of her second husband, William T. Newman Jr., the very

judge who had presided over her separation from Robert Johnson and whom she later married.

Before BET, before the settlement, before any of it, Sheila Crump was a concert violinist. Born on 25 January 1949, in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, to a neurosurgeon father and an accountant mother, she studied music at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and became the first African American to win a statewide violin competition in Illinois. She founded Young Strings in Action, a 140-member youth orchestra that performed internationally, including in Jordan, where King Hussein personally awarded her the country's highest educational honour.

That musical chapter of her life was almost completely erased when the BET story was told publicly.

She met Robert Johnson at Illinois. They married in 1969. He eventually became a lobbyist for the National Cable Television Association in Washington D.C., and in

1980 they launched BET from their home with a \$15,000 personal loan and a \$500,000 investment from cable entrepreneur John Malone. She wasn't a background figure in any of this. As executive vice president, she ran programming. In 1989, she created Teen Summit, a show addressing the real concerns of Black teenagers that became one of BET's most socially meaningful programmes. She was an operational and creative force behind a network that was rarely described that way when she came up in coverage.

BET grew into a cultural institution, the first television network targeting African-American audiences specifically, and in 1991, the first Black-controlled company listed on the New York Stock Exchange. When Viacom bought it for \$3 billion in 2001, the Johnsons became the first African-American billionaires in United States history. Robert Johnson got the magazine covers and the public credit. Sheila Johnson got an executive VP title and, eventually, a divorce settlement.

She retained her BET shares through the Viacom sale and divested them in 2002 after the marriage ended. Between the settlement and the share proceeds, she had roughly \$400 million in liquid capital. What she chose to do with it is the part of the story most coverage has never told properly.

In 2002, Johnson bought a 340-acre horse farm in Middleburg, Virginia, a small hunt country town in Loudoun County, populated by old money and an establishment that was not immediately welcoming of a Black woman with plans to build a luxury resort on the land. She met the kind of institutional friction that women and people of colour routinely face when seeking financing, approvals and community acceptance that white male developers rarely have to earn. She built it anyway.

Salamander Hotels and Resorts was formally founded in 2005. The flagship property, the Salamander Resort and Spa in Middleburg, didn't open until 2013, eleven years after she bought the land. What opened was one of the most decorated luxury resort properties in the country: a 168-room, Forbes Five-Star property with an equestrian centre, a 22,000-square-foot spa, multiple dining venues, a cooking school, a wine cellar, and the Blue Ridge Mountains as the backdrop. The resort has won the Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star award for both accommodation and spa repeatedly since opening. For someone who had been told, in various ways, that she was building in the wrong place, the recognition landed differently.

From that one property, she moved with speed and discipline. Salamander Collection now encompasses the Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club in Palm Harbor, Florida, host of the PGA TOUR's Valspar Championship; Hotel Bennett in Charleston, South Carolina; Aspen Meadows Resort in Colorado; Half Moon in Montego Bay, Jamaica; Aurora Anguilla in the Caribbean; and Salamander DC, the former Mandarin Oriental Washington D.C., which Salamander rebranded and now manages in partnership with Henderson Park following a deal struck in September 2022.

The numbers are real. Salamander generated \$212 million in revenue in a recent reporting period. Johnson has built what is now the most significant Black-owned luxury hospitality management company in the United States, from a horse farm in Virginia that nobody thought she should be building on.

Johnson holds principal shareholder stakes in the Washington Wizards of the NBA, the Washington Capitals of the NHL, and the Washington Mystics of the WNBA, all through Monumental Sports and Entertainment, the holding company that controls Washington D.C.'s dominant professional sports portfolio. She is the only African American woman in history to hold that distinction across three major American professional sports leagues at once.

Her entry into Monumental Sports came through her relationship with Ted Leonsis, the technology entrepreneur who controls the group. The timing has been commercially favourable: the Capitals won the Stanley Cup in 2018, and the combined value of Monumental Sports and Entertainment has appreciated considerably since she joined as a principal. Her role with the Mystics goes

well beyond passive minority ownership, she serves as president and managing partner, and has been a persistent public voice for serious institutional investment in women's sports, a position that carries more weight coming from someone who sits at the table rather than outside it.

Johnson produced the 2013 film *The Butler*, starring Forest Whitaker as Cecil Gaines, a Black man who served as a White House butler across eight presidential administrations. With a cast that included Oprah Winfrey, Cuba Gooding Jr. and Robin Williams, the film grossed more than \$116 million worldwide against a \$30 million budget. It established her as a credible film producer and extended her cultural reach well beyond hospitality and sports.

She serves as a Global Ambassador for CARE, the humanitarian organisation focused on poverty reduction, and her Sheila's I Am Powerful Challenge raised over \$8 million in 2007 to support women's economic empowerment. She co-founded the Sheila C. Johnson Center for Clinical Services at the University of Virginia, which provides mental health services to the public.

Her annual Family Reunion culinary festival at Salamander Middleburg, which she has run since 2021 in partnership with acclaimed Black chefs including Kwame Onwuachi, has become one of the most talked-about events in American luxury hospitality. It takes place on a property she was told she shouldn't build, featuring food prepared by chefs who look like her, in a corner of Virginia that wasn't expecting her. The woman who taught herself to master the violin, then built a cable network, then built a hotel empire, has turned that horse farm into something that could not have existed without her.

The fortune Forbes now attributes to Sheila Johnson is not the product of a single windfall or a fortunate market cycle. The BET sale was a moment. The divorce settlement was a payment. What she built with that payment, across two and a half decades, through a luxury hotel group, three sports franchises, a film production, and a philanthropic infrastructure, is a portfolio that does not depend on any single asset performing well at any particular time.

She is 77. She has outlasted the marriage that funded the beginning. She has outlasted the narrative that cast Robert Johnson as the architect of BET and her as the accompanying spouse. She has outlasted the scepticism of the Middleburg establishment that doubted what she was building. She lost William Newman in February 2026, quietly, at the start of a year in which her empire has reached its most widely recognised valuation.

The empire keeps running. Salamander keeps expanding. The sports stakes keep appreciating. The billionaire who started with a violin, co-built a television network, walked away from a marriage with \$400 million, and turned it into \$1.3 billion remains the most consequential wealth-building story in American hospitality.

UNLEARNING THE MYTH OF THE 'RELAXER' AND RECLAIMING THE AFRO

AKEMINIOBONG MICHAEL

Shotby Kemi M



The beginning of natural; my natural. It's been almost ten years since I walked into the salon at Oku street in Uyo, Akwalbom State and made the decision never to put another relaxer on my hair.

To this day, I have never understood why it's called a relaxer. There was nothing relaxing about it. My scalp would sting, burn, and itch, and after every session, I found myself dealing with the aftermath rather than enjoying the results.

The day I stopped relaxing my hair was, in every sense, ordinary. I had spent hours moving from one beauty supply store to another in search of a relaxer that was supposedly great for "virgin" hair. Seven shops later, exhausted and frustrated, I walked into an eighth store.

The attendant asked me what I wanted to do with my hair. Without thinking, I replied, "Twists. With my natural hair." The look on their faces made me feel as though I had grown horns. I was told it wouldn't be possible. My hair texture, they said, wasn't right for the style I wanted. Besides, they didn't really

do natural hair there. Disappointed but strangely determined, I left and headed to another salon.

That decision changed everything. There, I was told I didn't need a relaxer. I didn't need imported hair. I didn't need to transform my hair into something else entirely. The stylist simply worked with what I already had.

He showed me how to use my new growth, my so-called "undergrowth," and for the first time, I saw my hair differently.

For the first time, I saw what it could do. I was proud of my natural hair. Looking back now, I realise I couldn't have been alone in that journey. The truth is, many of us grew up learning to admire every hair texture except our own.

The Painful truth of Natural
The media did a number on us.
I grew up wanting hair like Rihanna's. Like Anita Baker's. I saw silky hair.



Flowing hair. Hair described as beautiful, lush, and desirable. I saw straight hair celebrated everywhere—in magazines, music videos, films, and advertisements.

What I rarely saw was hair that looked like mine.

I didn't see tightly coiled strands being called elegant. I didn't see afros described as professional. I didn't see kinky hair presented as something to be admired rather than managed.

So, when I finally chose to go natural, I wasn't just learning how to care for my hair. I was unlearning years of messaging that told me my hair needed fixing before it could be beautiful.

That journey was harder than I expected. There were no roadmaps. Few tutorials. Not many people around me who understood what I was trying to do.

Every stage felt like an experiment. But somewhere between the twists, the shrinkage, the wash days, and the moments of frustration, something shifted. My hair stopped being a problem to solve. It became a story to understand, a connection to who I was before beauty standards, before advertisements, before anyone convinced me that my crown needed to look like someone else's to be worthy.

Today, when I wear my afro, styled or as is, I am not just wearing a hairstyle. I am wearing acceptance. I am wearing the version of myself that finally learned that the hair growing naturally from my head was never the issue. It was the way I had been taught to see it.

I believe we have all struggled to get to this point and if you have not, well, welcome to the journey of acceptance.

No, the journey has been nothing easy, in truth it has its challenges seeing as you are not just fighting a battle of acceptance from others but also of self esteem and love, love of what is yours and love of what has always been imbedded in our roots.

Where do we go from here?

Easy, back to our roots. I mean this figuratively and in literal sense.



Shotby Kemi M

For the latter? Well, I have had proper experience in this and I would say it is for the best. Take the hair down. The hair filled with products you can't even pronounce and I am sure you are not aware of said products side effects. No need to worry, it always grows back. Mine did, yours will too.

slave trade era our people used hair styles as maps and guides to escape traders?

Well, we would be looking deeper into this as I give you tips on starting your natural hair journey next week.

Till then, as my people would say 'Asiere'(Goodbye)

For the former? we need more information on our hair, what causes it shrink, what makes it shine, what keeps it long and healthy, what to do to make it a proper crown. This knowledge needs to be learnt and then passed down from generations to generations and NO, it is not for the girlies only, my men are in it too.

I have been following Njideka of Ekanaturals for a while now and through here page I have learnt that my natural hair needs to be fed to remain healthy. When I say fed I mean actual food and spices.

My advise?
Go back to your roots, whatever that may mean for you. Cut the hair and start over or as I did, take off the edges and using the 'undergrowth' start a new journey.
If you love our hair, your hair, learn more about it and start teaching it.

Something I know I do a lot is tell people what I am excited about and this helps me better process the information as well remember and learn more about said topic. You should do the same with hair.

I am still in the learning process and I am happy to be your guide to understanding better our history through our roots.

Did you know; during the

MEET TEMITOPE FADAIRO, THE NIGERIAN ANALYST RESHAPING HOW US BANKS THINK ABOUT THEIR LEGACY SYSTEMS PROBLEM

CHISOM MICHAEL



Fadairo Iyamu Temitope's research paper, *Next-Generation Financial Analytics: Integrating Scalable Technology Solutions for System-Wide Transformation in the United States Banking Sector*, was published in November 2025. The paper is the product of several years of work examining how cloud-native infrastructure, predictive modelling and customer-centric analytics are reshaping American banking, and it arrives at an uncomfortable conclusion for an industry that has committed more than \$110 billion to technology spending in 2025 alone, according to Deloitte's most recent Banking and Capital Markets Outlook.

The conclusion, according to her, is that the headline transformation story is obscuring the real one. Noting, "The AI story is real, but it is not the story that will decide which US banks survive the next ten years," she says. "The story that will decide it is the one nobody wants to tell: the legacy core banking systems, some of them written in COBOL in the 1970s, that still run the actual money.

You cannot put a modern analytics layer on top of a forty-year-old ledger and call it transformation."

While much of the United States banking industry spent the last few years announcing artificial intelligence deployments, a Nigerian business analytics specialist working inside the US financial services sector was building a different case in the pages of a peer-reviewed journal. Her argument, now drawing attention across the US banking technology community, is that the industry is solving the wrong problem.

That position is not a slogan. It is the spine of a body of work she has been developing since completing her Master of Science in Business Analytics at DePaul University's Kellstadt Graduate School of Business in Chicago, a programme that placed her inside the American financial services discourse at exactly the moment it began wrestling with the integration crisis her paper now diagnoses.

Accenture's 2024 US banking technology report estimated that more than 40% of core banking infrastructure at major American institutions still runs on mainframe systems built before 1990.

The Federal Reserve's 2023 supervisory letter on operational resilience flagged legacy technology risk as a material supervisory concern. IBM's 2024 Cost of a Data Breach Report placed the average cost of a financial services breach at \$6.08 million, the highest of any sector.

Temitope's contribution is to connect those figures into a single analytical frame the industry has not yet built for itself.

What distinguishes her work in a field crowded with consultants and vendors is the bridge she occupies. Her professional practice spans business operations and analytics, business strategy and optimisation, account reconciliation, customer experience, and strategic thought leadership, a combination that places her at the intersection of the technical and governance sides of the problem she writes about.

Few analysts working on US banking transformation carry that breadth across the operational stack. Fewer still bring to it the perspective of a practitioner trained across two financial systems, Nigerian and American, each of which has had to confront legacy infrastructure under different pressures.

Her paper advances three recommendations that cut against current industry instinct. First, that US banks adopt collaborative technology strategies, sharing non-competitive infrastructure investment across institutions rather than each bank rebuilding the same core capability in isolation.

Second, that capital expenditure be redirected toward adaptive infrastructure designed for the next regulatory shift rather than the last one. Third, that governance frameworks, not algorithms, be treated as the primary asset of a digital-first bank.

It is the third recommendation she returns to most insistently. "Every serious failure in US banking technology over the last five years traces back to a governance gap before it traces to a technology

gap," she says.

"The banks that will win the next decade are the ones that understand this. The ones still treating governance as a compliance cost rather than a competitive asset are going to be very surprised by what happens next."

The framing is already earning her a hearing at a moment when the industry's own numbers are making her case for her. McKinsey's most recent US banking survey found that while 78% of executives described generative AI as a strategic priority, fewer than 20% reported a data foundation mature enough to support it at scale. "78% is the marketing number," Temitope observes. "The 20% is the operational one."

The difference between them is where the next wave of regulatory action and shareholder disappointment is going to happen. I do not think the industry has internalised that yet."

Her willingness to say so publicly, in print, at a moment when most voices in her field are competing to amplify the AI narrative rather than complicate it, is what has begun to set her apart. She belongs to a small group of practitioner-analysts whose work is shaping how the next phase of US banking transformation will actually be built, and whose standing rests not on consultancy branding but on the rigour of the argument itself.

Asked what she would tell a US bank CEO preparing a 2026/2027 technology budget, her answer is characteristically direct. "Cut the AI announcement budget."

Double the legacy modernisation budget. Hire a head of data governance before you hire another head of AI. And stop measuring transformation by how many pilots you have launched. Measure it by how many systems you have actually retired. That is the only number that means anything."

For an industry still writing the press release for its own reinvention, it is the kind of intervention that, on the evidence of the last five years, it can no longer afford to ignore. And for Fadairo Iyamu Temitope, it is the opening chapter of a body of work the US banking sector is going to be reading for some time.

HOW FEYIKEMI AKINYELURE ADVANCES A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN MODEL FOR BEHAVIOURAL HEALTH POLICY

CHISOM MICHAEL



Feyikemi Akinyelure has spent the last several years listening to the conversations that Nigeria's mental health policy has been built without. A Lagos-based behavioural health researcher and founder of the Dora-Care Behavioral Foundation, she has watched a generation of interventions arrive in underserved communities with the authority of data and the weakness of distance.

Her argument, now set out in a recent peer-reviewed paper, is that the country's response to a crisis of scale has been designed from the wrong end of the data pipeline, and that the cost of that inversion is measured in the people who never walk into the clinics built for them.

The numbers that frame the crisis are familiar. One in four Nigerians lives with a mental health condition, according to estimates cited by the Federal Ministry of Health, yet fewer than ten per cent ever receive formal care. The country has roughly 250 practising psychiatrists for a population of more than 220 million, one of the lowest ratios in the world, according to the World Health Organization. These are the figures most often quoted in the policy conversation.

In Akinyelure's perspective, they are also the reason the conversation keeps producing the wrong answers. In her words, "Policy is being built from the top of the data pipeline down," she says. "The numbers tell you

how many people are unwell. They do not tell you why the woman in Ajegunle will not walk into a clinic, or why the young man in Kano describes his depression as a spiritual problem, or why the mother in Enugu trusts her church elder more than a state-funded counsellor. Until policy learns to hear those answers, it will keep funding services the people it is built for will not use."

Her paper, *Leveraging Behavioural Health Data for Policy Innovation: Closing the Loop Between Community Insights and Public Health Decision-Making*, published in July 2025, makes a case most behavioural health research has avoided. Epidemiological data, for all its sophistication, captures incidence without context. It tells policymakers the scale of the problem and almost nothing about the texture of it. The result is a generation of interventions that look rigorous on paper and fail quietly in the neighbourhoods they were designed for.

Her framework proposes a deliberate architecture for closing that gap. It sequences four elements most health systems treat as separate: participatory data collection through focus groups, community dialogues and citizen-generated platforms; advanced analytics that combine that qualitative material with clinical and administrative records; ethical data governance to protect communities whose disclosures carry real social risk; and the institutional capacity to translate what is heard into what is funded. The architecture is not theoretical. It draws on work she has done at Dora-Care building community-led mental health programmes in underserved Nigerian communities, where the distance between a clinical database and a lived experience of stigma is the distance between a policy that works and one that does not.

Her argument arrives at a moment of unusual policy urgency. The Mental Health Act 2023, signed into law to replace the 1958 Lunacy Act, committed Nigeria for the first time to a rights-based framework for mental healthcare. Implementation remains uneven, and the funding mechanisms that would give the Act operational force are still being designed. State-level planners are, at this moment, drafting the frameworks that will determine whether the law becomes delivered or remains declared.

“An Act is a promise. A budget is a decision. A community-informed programme is the difference between the two,” Akinyelure observes. “Every state government now writing its implementation plan is making a choice about whether to build that plan from a spreadsheet or from a conversation. The spreadsheet is easier. The conversation is what will actually reach people.”

What distinguishes her work in a field crowded with advocacy and thin research is the bridge she occupies between clinical public health, community development, and data governance. Few behavioural health researchers in West Africa have combined those disciplines into a single operational framework, and fewer still have done so while running an active community foundation whose programmes provide the ground truth against which her research is tested. Her contribution is to insist, with methodological rigour, that community insight is not a supplement to behavioural health data. It is behavioural health data.

The methodological move at the centre of her paper is one most behavioural health research has been reluctant to commit to. Community insight, in her design, does not sit at the intake stage of a dataset. It sits inside its analytical core. That relocation changes what a behavioural health dataset is understood to contain, and changes in turn what a policy built on it is understood to be accountable for.

The accountability she has in mind is harder than a dashboard and slower than a survey. It is the work of remaining in a community after the questionnaire has been filed, and of letting what is said next revise what was concluded before. It is the part of behavioural health policy most frameworks have never been built to hold, and in her reading, the part that decides whether any of the rest of it reaches the people it was written for.

FOOD REVIEW: IS CRAVINGS N MORE WORTH THE SUNDAY CROWD?

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



It was another Sunday.

The kind of Sunday where you spend hours in church and by the time you are done, hunger is no longer a suggestion. It is a full-blown emergency.

At that point, I knew there was no way I was making it home before eating something. So I did what any reasonable hungry person would do: I found the nearest restaurant and walked in.

This time, it was Cravings N More in Ikosi Ketu.

The first thing I noticed was that I clearly was not the only one with that idea.

The place was packed.

Not slightly busy. Packed.

People were everywhere, tables were occupied, and there was a queue. For a second, I thought I might have to wait forever before getting food, but luckily, that was not the case.

A cheerful waitress came over almost immediately to take our order. The process was not exactly straightforward because we kept moving from one side of the counter to another, but somehow everything moved pretty quickly despite the crowd.

Then came the important part: the food.

We ordered two portions of native rice at ₦1,500 per portion. I have to give Cravings N More credit for one thing: they do not joke with portion sizes.

The servings were large.

Very large.

The two portions alone came to ₦3,000, and they were filling enough to make me wonder if I had overestimated how hungry I was.

We also got plantain, which cost ₦700 per portion, chicken for about ₦3,000, spaghetti at ₦1,400 per portion, and their sweet and sour fish sauce, which cost ₦2,700.

By the time everything arrived, there was food everywhere. For three takeaways, we spent ₦20,100 in total.

And honestly?

Considering the quantity of food we got, it felt fair.

I left satisfied and assumed that would be the end of my Cravings and More story.

Apparently not.

Because on Monday, I found myself ordering from them again.

Now, I am still not completely sure why.

Maybe I was genuinely craving Cravings and More.

Maybe it was just hunger.

Or maybe they happened to be the closest option available at the time.

Whatever the reason, I found myself opening my phone and placing another order.

This time, I did not visit the restaurant. I ordered online instead.

I got one of their combo meals—a mix of jollof rice, fried rice, chicken, and plantain—which cost about ₦3,800. I also ordered a spaghetti meal that came in at around ₦2,225.

The experience was much quieter than Sunday's crowded restaurant visit, but the outcome was the same.

Good portions.

Filling food.

No regrets.

Would I say Cravings and More is the most revolutionary restaurant in Lagos? No.

But if there is one thing my experience proves, it is that they did enough to make me come back less than 24 hours later.

And whether that was because of the food, the convenience, or a combination of both, I will let you decide.

BLENDING TRADITION WITH TECHNOLOGY: SEAMAN'S SCHNAPPS LIGHTS UP THE SKY AT OJUDE OBA 2026



Held under a theme that honoured the legacy of the Awujale of Ijebuland, the Ojude Oba festival 2026 once again brought together thousands of indigenes, dignitaries, cultural enthusiasts and visitors for one of the country's most iconic cultural gatherings.

Seaman's Schnapps rose to the occasion with an energetic and highly visible presence that made the brand impossible to miss.

The brand also delivered a standout performance at the 2026 Ojude Oba Festival in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State, asserting its dominance as a

master brand with a deep and lasting connection to Nigerian culture, heritage and community celebration.

The most striking moment of the brand's participation came through a powerful drone activation involving about 30 drones, which illuminated the sky in a dramatic display featuring Seaman's Bless (Omo Agba) 20cl. The spectacle created exceptional visibility, generated strong talkability and positioned Seaman's Schnapps at the centre of the festival's most memorable moments.



Across its branded spaces, the brand engaged festival goers with immersive consumer touchpoints, product sampling and experiential activities that brought the Seaman's Schnapps story to life in a way that felt both culturally relevant and commercially impactful.

Adding further energy to the celebration, Seaman's Schnapps ambassador, Adeniyi Johnson, joined the famous horse riding procession in the brand's signature blue colours, drawing attention and reinforcing the bond between tradition, style and contemporary storytelling.

Speaking on the brand's participation, Gbemileke Lawal, Marketing Manager, Nigerian Distilleries Limited, said Ojude Oba is a celebration of identity, pride and continuity, and Seaman's Schnapps is honoured to have shown up in a way that reflected those values while delivering a memorable experience for consumers. He noted that the brand remains committed to platforms that preserve heritage and deepen community connection.

Nnenna Onyenacho, Senior Brand Manager, Seaman's TSchnapps, said the brand's presence at Ojude Oba 2026 was designed to do more than participate. It was designed to lead.

According to her, the combination of cultural relevance, strong consumer engagement and the drone showcase made Seaman's Schnapps one of the defining brands of the festival. She added that the response from attendees confirmed the power of thoughtful brand storytelling when it is anchored in culture and delivered with innovation.

The celebration concluded with a Seaman's hosted afterparty that kept the energy alive through music, entertainment and shared celebration, closing out the festival on a high note.

With its bold, visible and culturally rooted presence at Ojude Oba 2026, Seaman's Schnapps reinforced its status as a brand that does not merely show up at important cultural moments. It owns them, elevates them and turns them into lasting brand experiences.

WORLD MILK DAY 2026: 5 AFRICAN WOMEN FARMERS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF DIARY

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



World Milk Day has been observed every June 1 since 2001, when the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations established it as a single global platform for a celebration that many countries were already holding independently. It has since grown into a campaign marked in more than 100 countries. Each year carries a theme; in 2026, that theme is “Celebrating Women Farmers,” a recognition of the more than 80 million women worldwide whose livelihoods are tied to dairy farming, among them nearly 37 million who head their own farms.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, 76 per cent of working women are employed in agrifood systems, yet access to land, credit, and markets remains disproportionately difficult for women farmers. World Milk Day 2026 offers a moment to name those doing the work anyway, building farms, processing plants, and supply chains from the ground up.

Nancy Abeiderrahmane — Mauritania

Nancy Abeiderrahmane is a British-born engineer who settled in Mauritania and, in 1987, founded Tiviski, Africa’s first camel milk dairy. At the time, there was no fresh pasteurised milk in Nouakchott; imported powdered and UHT milk from Europe was all city dwellers could buy. She secured a loan of approximately \$195,000 from a French development fund to establish Tiviski, formally known as Laitière de Mauritanie, and began producing pasteurised camel milk in cartons for the

local market. Today, Tiviski produces more than 20 products including fresh milk, yoghurt, cream, and cheeses from camel, cow, and goat milk, supplying pastoralists within a 90 km radius and supporting the livelihoods of more than 2,000 herders. The company received a \$5.2 million investment from the International Finance Corporation in 2016 to expand production. Her daughter, Maryam Abeiderrahmane, now runs the company.



Azieb Tsegay - Eritrea

Azieb Tsegay is the founder of one of the largest private dairy farms in Eritrea. She ran a poultry operation in Dubarwa, a town approximately 30 km from Asmara, until a bird flu epidemic devastated her flock in 2007 and she pivoted to dairy, starting with just two cows. She has since grown her herd to more than 100 cattle, producing between 3,000 and 4,000 litres of milk per day. Working with Dutch experts, she trained in cheese production and today manufactures 19 varieties of soft and hard cheese alongside yoghurt and butter, supplying Eritrea's mining industry as its lead dairy provider. Tsegay is also the Chairwoman of the Eritrean Women in Agribusiness Association, a network of over 70 members, and is widely credited as a visible model for female farmers across the country.



Nonny Penelope Wright — Botswana

Nonny Penelope Wright, known in her farming community as the “Mother of Cows,” founded Lopey Inc and the Sereledi dairy brand in 2013 in the Ngamiland region of north-western Botswana. Lopey Inc operates a complete dairy value chain, from raw milk production to retail-ready products including fresh milk, drinking yoghurt, and madila, a traditionally fermented milk, supplying schools and institutions across the region. In 2019, Wright lost 85 per cent of her cattle during one of Botswana's worst droughts. She responded by applying for a land extension, introducing artificial insemination to rebuild her herd, and planning expanded irrigation infrastructure. Lopey Inc is currently the youngest female-run dairy in Botswana and Wright is an executive member of the Botswana National Dairy Association.



Tahiya Bauso Massawe — Tanzania

Tahiya Bauso Massawe is a dairy farmer in the village of Bumbisudi on the semi-autonomous island of Zanzibar. She has kept cows for 20 years and, in recent years, has become one of the more prominent voices for the transformation of smallholder dairy farming in Tanzania's island region. In 2025, Massawe adopted Juncao grass technology, a high-yield livestock feed system developed by Chinese agricultural scientists at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University and introduced to Tanzania through government-to-government agricultural cooperation programmes. After feeding the grass to her 30 dairy cows, she observed a clear increase in milk production, even during periods when commercial feed supplements were unavailable. The change in feed allowed her to build a relationship with agricultural lenders. Her farm now employs more than 16 workers. Massawe has publicly stated her intention to improve irrigation on her farm so that she can maintain consistent year-round production and support other women in Bumbisudi to join the same system.



Ruth Wakariti — Kenya

Ruth Wakariti is a dairy farmer in Gathiriti village, Nyeri County, in the highlands of central Kenya. She manages a household farm alongside her husband, Elias Goturuma, beginning her day at 5 a.m. with feeding, milking, and stall cleaning before their seven children wake for school. Wakariti and her husband supply milk through Wakulima Dairy Limited, a cooperative in Nyeri County founded in 1990 to collect and market members' milk. Through the VWB/VSF VETS programme, an eight-year initiative running from 2020 to 2028, they received training in sustainable farm management, introduced new forage crops including Napier grass, Brachiaria, sweet potatoes, and arrowroot, built separate calf housing, and improved overall cow comfort. Wakariti leads the Gathiriti Dairy Farmers Group, a local farmers' collective, and her story is consistently cited in agricultural development literature as an example of how access to training, market linkages, and gender-responsive technical support can improve the productivity and income of women smallholder dairy farmers.



Honourable Mention: Aisha Bashir — Nigeria

Aisha Bashir founded Cam Dairy Foods Limited in 2017, a pastoralist-driven dairy social enterprise in Abuja that partnered with over 400 pastoralists to produce locally sourced fresh milk, yoghurt, butter, and cream for Nigerian households. Central to her model was advancing women in the dairy supply chain, equipping female pastoralists and vendors with business skills, financial literacy, and food safety training. Cam Dairy Foods ceased operations in July 2025, a casualty of infrastructure deficit, and intense competition from subsidised dairy imports. The work Bashir did over nearly a decade remains a reference point for what a locally built, women-centred Nigerian dairy enterprise can look like.



WORLD MILK DAY 2026: 3 SIMPLE MILK RECIPES TO TRY THIS WEEKEND

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



Milk is more than a breakfast staple. It is the base of some of the most comforting recipes in home cooking, and one of the few ingredients that works just as well in a savoury pot as it does in a sweet one. Yet for something so central to how we eat, it rarely gets the attention it deserves. World Milk Day, observed every 1 June, exists in part to change that, to put milk and the people who produce it at the centre of the conversation.

This year's theme, "Celebrating Women Farmers," is a reminder that the milk in your fridge has a human story behind it. The most fitting way to mark that is to actually use it.

Here are three recipes worth trying this weekend

Milk pudding with coconut by Tiffy Cooks

Ingredients

500 ml milk

50 g cornstarch

50 g sugar

1 cup shredded coconut

Method

Add half of the milk into a non-stick pot and add in the sugar. Mix until combined.



In a separate bowl, combine the remaining milk with the cornstarch and mix until fully combined.

Bring the pot with the sugar and milk to the stove and turn the heat to medium-low. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes until the milk has heated through. Do not let it simmer.

Stir the cornstarch mixture and slowly pour it into the pot while stirring continuously. Keep stirring until the mixture reaches a thick consistency, around 4 minutes.

Line a container with parchment paper and pour in the mixture. Leave to rest for 1 to 2 hours until fully cooled and set.

Cut into bite-size pieces, coat with shredded coconut, and serve.

Palkova by Aarthi

A rich Indian sweet made by reducing milk down to a thick, halwa-like consistency with sugar.

Ingredients

Milk

Sugar

Ghee (clarified butter made by simmering regular butter until the water evaporates and milk solids separate, leaving a rich, golden fat with a nutty flavour)

Cardamom powder

Method

Pour the milk into a large, heavy-bottomed pan and bring it to a boil over high heat.

Once boiling, reduce the heat slightly and let the milk cook for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon. Scrape the sides of the pan regularly to prevent the milk from burning. Resting a wooden spatula across the top of the pan will stop the milk from boiling over.

When the milk has reduced to about one-third of its original volume, add the sugar and stir well to combine.

Keep stirring continuously. The milk will begin to thicken quickly once the sugar is in.

After 2 to 3 minutes, add the ghee a little at a time, stirring it in as you go. The mixture will thicken further and take on a light golden colour.

Stir in the cardamom powder, then turn off the heat and leave to cool. The palkova may look slightly runny at this stage but will thicken as it cools.

Once completely cooled, serve or transfer to an airtight container.



Portuguese milk tarts by Kay of Homemade Interest

Ingredients

Milk

Eggs

Butter

Sugar

Flour

Methods

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C)

In a large bowl, combine the sugar and flour. Whisk in the beaten eggs, then add the melted butter, continuing to whisk. Pour in the milk and whisk until the mixture is smooth and fully combined.

Grease a muffin tin and pour the mixture into each cup, filling to just over three-quarters full.

Bake on the centre rack for 30 minutes or until the sides and tops are golden.

Remove from the oven and immediately run a knife around the edges of each tart to loosen them. Lift out while still hot.

Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar and serve.



HOW CYNTHIA ABRAHAM IS DRIVING DIGITAL INNOVATION FOR AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE UK

...co-founds Zora African Market





Cynthia Anuoluwapo Abraham, Co-Founder of Zora African Market, has described digital commerce as a major tool for transforming African-owned businesses in the United Kingdom following the successful launch of the Zora African Market platform on June 1, 2026.

Abraham stated that the newly launched marketplace was created to help African entrepreneurs embrace technology, expand their customer reach, and compete more effectively within the growing UK retail market.

According to her, many African businesses in the diaspora possess quality products and strong cultural value but often struggle with limited visibility, fragmented customer access, and the challenges of scaling beyond traditional physical stores.

She explained that Zora African Market was developed as a centralized digital platform where customers can conveniently access authentic African products while vendors benefit from increased exposure and business growth opportunities.

The platform, available on iOS, Google Play Store, and the web, features a broad range of African products including groceries, spices, grains, fresh and frozen foods, beverages, beauty and skincare products, traditional fashion items, footwear, accessories, arts and crafts, home décor, hair products, herbal products, and gift items.

Abraham noted that the rise of e-commerce has significantly changed the way consumers shop in the UK, creating opportunities for minority-owned businesses to scale faster through digital platforms. She emphasized that African entrepreneurs must take advantage of these opportunities to strengthen their presence in mainstream markets.

She further stated that Zora African Market is not only focused on selling products but also on promoting African culture, creativity, and entrepreneurship through a trusted and accessible marketplace.



Speaking on business empowerment, Abraham revealed that vendors can currently register on the platform free of charge with no hidden costs, adding that the initiative was designed to reduce entry barriers for small and medium-scale African businesses seeking to establish an online presence.

She added that the company hopes to build a strong ecosystem that supports African-owned brands, encourages economic inclusion, and creates sustainable opportunities for entrepreneurs across different communities in the UK.

Abraham expressed optimism that the platform would contribute to the growing recognition of African businesses within the UK economy while helping customers gain easier access to authentic African products from trusted vendors.

AS TECHNOLOGY RESHAPES CREATIVITY, NIGERIAN INTERIOR DESIGNERS CALL FOR A MORE HUMAN FUTURE

...as IDAN Marks World Interiors Day 2026 with Conversation on nature, Culture, tech

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



As technology continues to transform the way people live, work and create, the Interior Designers Association of Nigeria (IDAN) used World Interiors Day 2026 to challenge a growing assumption of the digital age: that technological advancement must come at the expense of human connection.

Bringing together designers, architects, creative professionals, industry leaders and emerging practitioners, the event explored this year's global theme, "Balancing Nature, Culture and Technology in the Digital Age," through a series of keynote presentations, industry conversations and thought-provoking panel discussions that placed people at the centre of design.

In her opening address, IDAN President, Jacqueline Aki, who recently marked one year in office, urged practitioners to view technology as a powerful tool rather than a substitute for human creativity. "Technology should never replace the designer," she emphasized. "Its value lies in helping us make better decisions; understanding how people experience sound, light, movement and space; so we can create environments that genuinely improve lives."

Her remarks reflected a broader vision for the association, one that extends beyond professional representation to ecosystem building. According to her, IDAN is committed to supporting designers at every stage of their journey, from students and emerging talents to established practitioners, while fostering a stronger and more connected industry.

The keynote address was delivered by Titi Ogufero, Founder of IDAN and former President of the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI). Drawing from her pioneering role in shaping the interior design profession in Nigeria and representing African design on the global stage, she spoke to the evolution of the profession and the responsibility of the designers to remain relevant, human-centred and culturally grounded in a rapidly changing world.

Tracing IDAN's journey since its establishment in 2017, Ogufero highlighted the association's efforts to strengthen professional standards, promote education and expand opportunities for practitioners across Nigeria. She pointed to one of the association's landmark achievements; its collaboration with the University of Lagos to advance formal interior design education after nearly a decade of sustained advocacy.



“The role of technology is not copy and paste,” she noted. “We must be careful not to lose the soul of our profession. Design exists to serve humanity.” One of the most compelling moments of her address came when she challenged common notions of identity in design.

“There is no such thing as an African designer,” she argued. “Just as we do not speak of an African doctor or an African engineer, designers serve humanity. Culture informs our work, but it should not limit our thinking.”

The conversation around human-centred design continued with technology entrepreneur and wellness design advocate Kehinde Awoyinfa, who examined the relationship between built environments and human wellbeing.

Referencing research showing that people spend approximately 90 percent of their lives indoors, Awoyinfa argued that designers carry a profound responsibility to create spaces that support health, comfort and performance. He highlighted the growing role of wellness technologies in improving air quality, water quality, lighting conditions, sleep patterns and overall occupant experience in both residential and commercial environments.

For cultural leader and creative entrepreneur Qudus Onikeku, the discussion returned to a simple but powerful principle: people must remain at the centre of every design decision.

Describing the human body as his primary creative tool, the celebrated choreographer reflected on how every artistic discipline ultimately exists to serve human experience.

“When we remove humanity from the process, we remove meaning,” he said.

The event also featured reflections from Arc. Moniba

Ogunlami, Vice Chair of Nigerian Institute of Architects, Lagos Chapter; who emphasized the importance of integrating interior designers into projects from their earliest stages. Speakers noted that meaningful collaboration between architects, engineers and interior designers can lead to more efficient, functional and responsive spaces.

A fireside conversation moderated by intellectual property and entertainment lawyer Omotayo Abiode further explored the tensions and opportunities created by emerging technologies.

Interior and production designer Inioluwa Aiyemomi reflected on the emotional and experiential role of design, noting that lighting, much like colour and texture, shapes how people interpret and connect with space. While embracing innovation, she expressed a desire to preserve what she described as “the beauty of the process”; the thinking, experimentation and creative discovery that underpin meaningful design.

Tinuke Odufa, an interior architect, emphasized the enduring value of human contribution in the design process. For her, the future of design does not lie in replacing people with technology, but in ensuring that technology continues to serve and amplify human ideas.

Awoyinfa echoed similar sentiments, encouraging practitioners not merely to adopt technology but to master it intentionally and responsibly.

Onikeku challenged participants to rethink their understanding of innovation itself, arguing that technology should not always be viewed as something imported from elsewhere. He encouraged designers to recognize and amplify existing local knowledge, systems and cultural assets as forms of innovation capable of addressing contemporary challenges.

The event also marked a significant moment in the association’s evolution with the unveiling of IDAN’s refreshed Logo. Revealed through a specially produced video presentation, the new identity signals a new era of inclusion, accessibility and growth for the organization. The unveiling was accompanied by an open invitation for aspiring and practicing designers to join the association and participate in shaping the future of the profession.

As conversations around artificial intelligence, automation and digital transformation continue to reshape creative industries globally, World Interiors Day 2026 served as a timely reminder that the future of design may not be defined solely by technological advancement, but by how effectively technology is used to deepen human connection, cultural relevance and wellbeing.

For IDAN, the message was clear: innovation matters, but humanity must remain the foundation upon which great design is built.

About the Interior Designers Association of Nigeria (IDAN)



LAGOS LEATHER FAIR 2026: PIONEERING A STRATEGIC SHIFT 'BEYOND THE HIDE'



Funke Jones, Bank Executive and Member, Board of Trustees, Lagos Leather Fair; Kola Oshalusi, Director of Photography, Lagos Leather Fair; Yetty Ogunnubi, CEO, YD Company, Project Director and Member, BOT, Lagos Leather Fair; Femi Olayebi, Creative Director, Femi Handbags, Founder and Convener of Lagos Leather Fair; Sinmisola Olaseinde, Manager, SME Partnerships and Collaboration Unit, Ecobank; and Maureen Obaweya, CEO, Morin O Leather Artistry and Member, BOT, Lagos Leather Fair, during the Lagos Leather Fair 2026 Press Conference held in Lagos on May 29, 2026

The Lagos Leather Fair (LLF), Africa's premier leather platform has officially kicked off the media countdown to its highly anticipated 9th edition with a press conference hosted recently at the Ananse Center for Design.

Operating under the powerful theme, "Beyond The Hide: Scaling Value, Building Industry. Driving Growth," the conference gathered top-tier journalists, media stakeholders, and industry champions to unveil the blueprint for the main fair.

The event is scheduled to run from June 27th to 28th, 2026, at the Ecobank Pan African Centre (EPAC) in Victoria Island, Lagos.

The press briefing mapped out the strategic evolution of the fair from its origins in 2017 to its current status as West Africa's primary vehicle for economic advancement in local manufacturing.

This year's focus highlights a critical industry transformation: transitioning raw creative potential into a structured, globally competitive African leather value chain.

The event commenced with warm opening remarks from Project Lead, PR Director, and Board of Trustees (BOT) member, Dr Yetty Ogunnubi, who officially welcomed all the guests and members of the press to the conference.

Femi Olayebi, Convener, Lagos Leather Fair and Creative Director of FemiHandbags, delivered an inspiring welcome speech reflecting on the 9-year evolution of the fair and the intentional direction behind the 2026 theme:

“The 2026 focus moves beyond raw materials to strengthening market value, infrastructure, and creating pathways for sustainable cross-continental growth within Africa’s leather and creative industries.”

She spoke passionately about the journey so far, the early challenges faced, and the incredible operational effort required to put an event of this magnitude together.

Simisola Olaseinde, EcoBank SME Partnerships & Collaborations Manager, spoke on EcoBank Business’s strategic alignment with the fair’s ecosystem and commitment to scaling MSMEs through tailored financial frameworks and structural support:

“EcoBank’s framed support beyond sponsorship enables SMEs with market access, financing, digital solutions, and cross-border scaling via our 30+ African market footprint. Our support is focused on empowering creative entrepreneurs through financing solutions, business infrastructure, and systems that strengthen manufacturing capacity and industrial commerce.”

Olufunke Jones delved deeply into the backend realities of execution, highlighting exactly what it takes to put the event together. She emphasised why heavy-hitting sponsorships and intentional partnerships are fundamentally needed to push this type of developmental ecosystem forward.

Kola Oshalusi, Director of Photography, took the media through the visual expectations of the upcoming 2-day event, outlining the creative direction and visual documentation planned for the showcase and unveiling the comprehensive experiential roadmap for the 2-day fair, highlighting immersive activations such as The LLF Runway Shows, The Signature Piece Challenge featuring a N1,000,000 prize reward, and the prestigious LLF Awards celebration,

Owodunni Temiloluwa, Training & Curriculum Manager at the Ananse Centre for Design, shared insights on the design center playing host to The LLF Atelier: “In partnership with the Ananse Centre for Design, this immersive activation will function as a live mini-manufacturing hub.

“It will involve machinery demonstrations, industry experts operating equipment, and a visible behind-the-scenes production experience, showing attendees the technical processes required to transform raw materials into finished luxury goods in real time.”

Otejiri Ejumabone, BOT member and curator of The Maker’s Bench, took the audience through an interactive breakdown of the space, explaining what visitors can expect as they get hands-on experience building simple leather pieces.

Adding depth to the panel, leather designers and BOT members Morin Obaweya and Anita Aisha Ugah spoke extensively about their unique personal experiences over the years and the measurable industrial growth they have witnessed firsthand through the platform’s intervention.

The lively interactive session with accredited digital and broadcast media was masterfully anchored by

Tolu Ajibola, who moderated questions from journalists regarding market access, technology, and compliance. Wrapping up the formal event.

Yetty Ogunnubi delivered the official vote of thanks, expressing profound appreciation to the media partners, production crew, and supporting sponsors. Following the briefing, the panel moved to exclusive broadcast interviews and group photography alongside supporting sponsors, exhibitors, and the fair’s Board of Trustees.

Registration to attend the 2026 fair remains open for the leather goods buyers, visionary designers, industry enthusiasts, and trade stakeholders can secure their attendance badges directly.

HOW ADENEKAN MAYOWA'S NEW PLATFORM WILL ELIMINATE DIASPORA PAYMENT FRICTION



For many people living and working outside their home countries, the hardest financial moments rarely come when money is being earned or received. They come when it is time to use it.

A balance can reflect instantly. A transfer can arrive without delay. But at the point of payment, often in the most ordinary settings, things can suddenly fail.

A declined card at a supermarket checkout in a foreign city. A subscription that quietly stops working. A payment terminal that refuses a card

that, moments earlier, showed a healthy balance on a banking app. In those moments, money is no longer experienced as money. It becomes uncertainty.

It is within this gap between digital visibility and real-world usability that Paykudy, a new financial technology platform targeting diaspora users, is positioning itself ahead of its launch.

The problem it is attempting to solve is persistent: money that exists digitally but does not consistently translate into seamless spending across borders.

The solution, according to the company, is a unified spending system built around a physical debit card linked to global payment networks, designed to allow users access and use their funds across countries without switching between fragmented financial tools.

Developed by Paykudy Inc., the platform is designed to reduce the unpredictability that often comes with cross-border financial activity, particularly for diaspora workers, remote earners, and frequent travellers.

Speaking ahead of the rollout, Paykudy's founder, Adenekan Mayowa, said the idea was shaped directly by patterns of user experience he has seen and personally encountered.

"I've been in situations where everything on the screen says the money is there," he said. "You check your balance, it is fine, you go to pay, and then suddenly the transaction fails. Nothing about the funds has changed, but access disappears at the point of need."

He added that what makes the experience more frustrating is not just the failure itself, but its unpredictability.

"You cannot plan for it," he said. "One moment your card works, the next moment it doesn't, even though nothing has changed from your side. That inconsistency is what creates the real problem."

Mayowa described the broader impact as a breakdown between digital certainty and physical reality.

"It creates a situation where people start carrying backup options for their own money," he said. "That should not be normal."

He noted that Paykudy was built to address that gap by reducing dependence on multiple fragmented tools and creating a more consistent spending experience across borders.

"The goal is simple," he said. "If your money is available, you should be able to use it anywhere

the system is accepted, without second-guessing or switching between platforms."

In a second reflection, Mayowa said the platform is focused on stability rather than reinvention.

"We are not trying to change what money is," he said. "We are trying to remove the friction between having it and using it, especially for people who live across different countries."

The platform is being built within regulated banking structures in partnership with licensed financial institutions, with a focus on simplifying how users interact with their funds across different environments.

For users, the promise is a more predictable financial experience, fewer moments of uncertainty at checkout, fewer interruptions in everyday transactions, and a system where access to money feels consistent rather than conditional.

For diaspora users, the real gap in modern finance is not access to money, but the certainty of being able to use it when it matters.



21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGIES, CHINA MOBILE UNVEIL AI-READY CLOUD PLATFORM TO CRASH LOCAL ENTERPRISE COSTS



Wale Ajisebutu, Chief Executive Officer of 21st Century Technologies, and Terry Leung, Chief Executive Officer, Africa Region, China Mobile International Limited at the launch of a partnership between China Mobile and 21st Century Technologies to develop cloud and AI infrastructure in Nigeria, held at the 21st Century Technologies office in Lekki, Lagos, recently.

In a major move for the West African digital economy, Nigeria's digital infrastructure pioneer, 21st Century Technologies, has forged a strategic partnership with China Mobile International Limited (CMI)—the global arm of the world's largest telecommunications operator by subscriber count.

The collaboration aims to deploy a localized, highly advanced cloud and Artificial Intelligence (AI) infrastructure platform built directly on top of 21st Century's massive data center footprint in Lagos.

Rather than a simple preliminary agreement, both companies have confirmed that project implementation is actively

underway, with hardware deployment and localization protocols moving toward immediate commercial readiness.

The partnership comes at a critical time as Nigeria aggressively pursues data sovereignty and localizes its digital assets. By layering China Mobile's global cloud resources, localized software tools, and agile AI incubation frameworks onto 21st Century Technologies' underlying infrastructure, the joint project aims to give Nigerian enterprises, developers, and government agencies a massive performance edge—at a price point projected to be up to 40 percent cheaper than traditional global hyperscalers like Amazon Web Services (AWS), billed entirely in local currency.

For global tech giants, West Africa represents an uncultivated frontier for cloud architectures. Speaking on the strategic intent behind the rollout, Terry Leung, Chief Executive Officer for the Africa Region at China Mobile International Limited, emphasised that the collaboration is designed to move beyond traditional telecommunications into advanced sci-tech service delivery.

“We have an active, operational cooperation in the cloud space,” Leung explained. “We are co-building a comprehensive cloud platform in Nigeria, which is an exceptional start for both of us. Based on this platform, we will deliver an expanding suite of applications related to AI and cloud systems to the local market.”

When asked why China Mobile chose to anchor its Nigerian strategy with 21st Century Technologies, Leung pointed to the company’s deep market experience and localized execution model.

Leung clarified that the platform is not merely a long-term roadmap but an active deployment. “Today, we are past the phase of signing paperwork; we are already in the project construction phase and actively building out the resource platform. Very soon, it will be fully open for business.”

The economic implications for Nigeria are significant. Globally, the tech sector has entered a definitive “AI era,” where large-scale model training and intelligent applications rely heavily on high-performance cloud resource tiers. However, a stark regional digital divide remains across the continent.

Leung stressed that the project represents a crucial evolution beyond basic infrastructure: “A data center on its own is effectively real estate—it provides space, power, and cooling. That is only low-level infrastructure. Modern enterprises require complete, alternative solutions.

“This platform integrates cloud resources to help local businesses improve efficiency and give software developers an agile environment to incubate AI applications. If you lack these resources, catching up with global trends becomes incredibly difficult. The gap between Africa and developed countries will only widen, so we have to hurry.”

For Wale Ajisebutu, Chief Executive Officer of 21st Century Technologies, this partnership represents the culmination of an infrastructure journey nearly three decades in the making.

“I started 21st Century Technologies 29 years ago with a simple but profound vision,” Ajisebutu stated.

“To build compelling, world-class infrastructure in Nigeria that solves critical industry problems using best-in-class local talent. Crucially, we wanted to achieve this by partnering with global leaders while keeping operational sustainability at our core.

For 29 years, we have built that physical foundation. Now, we are launching an operational partnership with China Mobile to revolutionize the local market.”

Responding to queries about the sheer scale of the deployment, Ajisebutu emphasised that 21st Century’s facilities go far beyond typical local server rooms, encompassing independent power plants, highly specialized data centers, and advanced training academies.

“Our digital infrastructure footprint is unmatched in Nigeria. To put it in perspective, the data center capacity we are building in this country is larger than all the other local data centers combined. It is that massive.”

Despite this immense capacity, critics often wonder whether the domestic market generates enough digital content to justify such heavy industrial investment. Ajisebutu strongly refutes the idea that the market is saturated, describing Nigeria’s digital space as “grossly uncultivated.”

This offshore data drain has long impacted local enterprises, exposing them to high dollar-denominated fees and severe foreign exchange volatility. When asked why local companies and government bodies continue to host critical data overseas despite having local options, Ajisebutu pointed to past market limitations while predicting an imminent shift.

“What we are executing right now is the beginning of a true digital renaissance in Nigeria,” Ajisebutu asserted.

“In the past, organizations faced subpar local options. But they will start coming back home very soon to leverage what we have built. There are no two ways about it: if you offer compelling solutions and world-class infrastructure, people will use it. Most of the players who have historically operated in this market are mediocre; they make loud announcements without building real capacity.”

For Ajisebutu, the ultimate competitive advantage comes down to economics and ease of access. “If I provide your business with a world-class cloud service that is 40 percent cheaper than AWS, and allow you to pay entirely in local currency without FX exposure, which one will you choose? The answer is obvious. You attract corporate clients by offering the absolute best technical and financial incentives.”

He also noted that the regulatory environment is aligning with this vision. “The federal government has already done its part by establishing clear data sovereignty policies. Now, it’s about continuous enforcement. Data generated in Nigeria must stay within Nigeria. Our cooperation with China Mobile is designed precisely to fulfill that mandate.

“They bring the advanced software applications and platform layers; we supply the industrial infrastructure. By combining these strengths, we are putting powerful tools directly into the hands of local businesses and developers.”

10 HARDEST LANGUAGES FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS TO LEARN

CHISOM MICHAEL



Learning a new language can create opportunities for travel, business and cultural exchange, but some languages require significantly more time for English speakers to master than others.

According to language-learning organisations, such as Effective Language Learning and Rosetta Stone, languages are ranked based on the amount of study typically needed to reach professional working proficiency. The ranking, which draws on Foreign Service Institute-style benchmarks, shows that the level of difficulty largely depends on how different a language is from English.

Category III languages present challenges such as unfamiliar grammar structures, pronunciation patterns and writing systems. Category IV languages, classified as “super-hard,” combine several of these obstacles, making them among the most demanding for English speakers.

Experts note that learning tonal systems, new alphabets or thousands of written characters can significantly

increase study time. Despite these challenges, millions of learners successfully achieve fluency through consistent practice and long-term commitment.

According to the estimates, learners may need up to 88 weeks of study to achieve proficiency in the most difficult languages.

Here are the 10 hardest languages for English speakers to learn.

1. Arabic – 88 Weeks

Arabic is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with speakers across the Middle East and North Africa.

The language uses its own script, which differs completely from the Latin alphabet used in English. Learners must also adapt to reading and writing from right to left.

Arabic includes a range of regional dialects, meaning that spoken language can vary significantly between countries. These factors contribute to its placement in Category IV.

2. Cantonese Chinese – 88 Weeks

Cantonese is spoken mainly in Hong Kong, Macau and parts of southern China.

One of the main challenges for English speakers is its tonal system. The meaning of a word can change depending on the tone used when speaking.

Learners must also become familiar with Chinese characters, which require memorisation rather than alphabet-based spelling.

3. Mandarin Chinese – 88 Weeks

Mandarin is the world's most spoken native language and serves as the official language of China and Taiwan.

Like Cantonese, Mandarin relies on tones to convey meaning. A slight change in pronunciation can result in a completely different word.

The writing system uses thousands of characters, creating an additional challenge for learners accustomed to alphabet-based languages.

4. Japanese – 88 Weeks

Japanese combines several language-learning challenges into one system.

The language uses three writing systems: Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji. Learners must understand all three to read and write effectively.

Sentence structure also differs from English, requiring learners to think about grammar in a different way.

5. Korean – 88 Weeks

Korean completes the Category IV group of "Super-Hard" languages.

Although it uses Hangul, a unique alphabet designed specifically for the Korean language, learners still face significant grammatical differences compared with English.

The language structure, sentence patterns and levels of formality require substantial study before proficiency can be achieved.

6. Urdu – 44 Weeks

Urdu is spoken by millions of people in Pakistan and India.

It belongs to Category III and requires around 44 weeks of study.

The language uses a script derived from Persian and Arabic, which means learners must master a new writing system alongside unfamiliar vocabulary and grammar patterns.

7. Uzbek – 44 Weeks

Uzbek is the official language of Uzbekistan and is spoken across Central Asia.

The language introduces grammatical structures that differ considerably from English. Word formation and sentence construction often require learners to adopt new language habits.

These differences place it among the more difficult languages for English speakers.

8. Vietnamese – 44 Weeks

Vietnamese presents a challenge largely because of its tonal nature.

Words can carry different meanings depending on how they are pronounced, making listening and speaking particularly demanding for English speakers.

Although it uses a Latin-based script, mastering tones remains a significant hurdle.

9. Xhosa – 44 Weeks

Xhosa is one of South Africa's official languages and is known for its click consonants.

These sounds are uncommon in English and require learners to develop new pronunciation skills.

The language's grammatical structure also differs from English, adding to the learning process.

10. Zulu – 44 Weeks

Another major language spoken in South Africa, Zulu, shares some similarities with Xhosa, including the use of click sounds.

Learners must also understand noun classes and grammatical rules that have no direct equivalent in English.

As a result, Zulu remains among the most time-intensive languages in Category III.

THE WOMAN CONNECTING AFRICA, ONE FLIGHT AT A TIME

CHISOM MICHAEL





Ruth Chinenye Chukwueke has spent over five years building a case that business aviation is not a luxury; it is infrastructure.

There is a moment in every conversation with Chukwueke when the subject shifts from aviation to something larger, the future of a continent. She is a Business Aviation Professional, Luxury Aviation Strategist, and Owner Services Executive who has spent over five years working at the edge of where premium travel, investment, and executive mobility meet.

She has built her career in an environment where there is no margin for error. Her clients are high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth individuals. In that world, the smallest detail carries weight, and the standard never shifts.

“When a business aircraft lands somewhere in Africa, it is not just carrying passengers. It is carrying intent. It is carrying an investment. The infrastructure that supports those landings is the infrastructure that supports the economies around them.”

Her focus on Africa is not incidental. It is the thread that runs through her professional vision. She sees the continent’s aviation sector as sitting at a turning point, a moment when the right investment, the right policy, and the right professionals could reshape regional connectivity in ways that unlock growth far beyond the aviation industry itself.

Her conviction is backed by a rigorous academic foundation. Chukwueke holds a Master’s degree

in Tourism and Hospitality Management from Rome Business School. She has completed executive programmes at Yale School of Management, where she studied negotiation and business strategy, and at London Business School, where she focused on strategic investment management. Her professional certifications include an Advanced Leadership Programme from GOTNI Leadership Centre and a VVIP Service Elegance and Silver Service qualification from Dubai.

These are not titles she wears lightly. Each qualification reflects a deliberate effort to think across disciplines, to understand not just how to deliver service, but how to lead organisations, negotiate at the highest levels, and grasp the investment dynamics that shape aviation markets.

“Business aviation is not a luxury. It is infrastructure. It is the difference between a deal that closes and one that does not.”

She advocates loudly for that infrastructure, through industry forums, policy dialogue, and strategic partnerships. But she also advocates for something closer to her own story: the presence of women at the centre of it.

Aviation, she acknowledges, has historically been a space where women, particularly in leadership, have had to fight for visibility. She is not content to simply occupy a seat at the table. She is working to bring others with her, mentoring young professionals and championing careers for women in a sector that has too often looked past them.

“This industry needs different voices. Not for the sake of it — because those voices see things others miss. They build differently. They serve differently.”

What Chukwueke is building, across her career and her advocacy, is a version of African aviation that is more connected, more inclusive, and more capable of driving the investment that the continent’s economies need. She is doing it one service, one conversation, one flight at a time.

HERE ARE 7 BUSINESSES YOU CAN START IN UNDER 14 HOURS A WEEK

CHISOM MICHAEL



Many people want to start a business but struggle to find the time. Between full-time jobs, family responsibilities and other commitments, building a company can seem out of reach.

However, changes in technology and consumer behaviour are creating opportunities for people to launch businesses without having to work long hours from the start.

Several business models now allow entrepreneurs to test ideas, attract customers and generate income while dedicating fewer than 14 hours per week.

Here are seven businesses that can be launched on a part-time basis and expanded over time.

1. AI literacy services

As companies adopt artificial intelligence tools, many business owners are finding it difficult to understand how to use them effectively.

This has created demand for professionals who can help businesses identify repetitive tasks that can be automated and train staff to use AI tools correctly.

The service can begin with a small number of clients, allowing entrepreneurs to work flexible hours while building experience and a customer base. No-code software and automation tools can also reduce the amount of time needed to deliver services.

As demand grows, the business can expand into consulting, training programmes or software products.

2. Content Repurposing Agency

Businesses are producing more digital content than ever, including podcasts, interviews and videos. However, many do not have the time or expertise to turn one piece of content into multiple formats for different platforms.

A content repurposing agency helps clients transform existing material into social media posts, blog articles, newsletters and short-form videos.

AI-powered editing platforms have reduced the time required for video editing, caption creation and audio enhancement. This allows entrepreneurs to manage multiple projects without committing to full-time hours.

The business can grow steadily as more companies seek ways to maximise the value of their content.

3. E-commerce Store

E-commerce remains one of the most accessible businesses for entrepreneurs with limited time.

Online sellers can focus on niche products that target specific customer groups. By using drop-shipping models or third-party fulfilment services, business owners can avoid managing inventory and shipping operations themselves.

Much of the work involves product selection, marketing and customer engagement, tasks that can be handled outside regular working hours.

With repeat customers and effective digital marketing, an e-commerce business can gradually expand into a larger operation.

4. Pressure Washing Business

Pressure washing continues to offer opportunities for entrepreneurs seeking a service-based business.

The work involves cleaning driveways, buildings, pavements and other outdoor surfaces using specialised equipment.

Starting during quieter periods can give business owners time to market their services and establish a customer base before demand increases.

Local community platforms and social media groups often serve as effective channels for attracting customers. As reputation grows through referrals and repeat business, operators can take on larger projects and commercial contracts.

5. Software Development

Businesses across different sectors often face repetitive tasks that consume time and resources.

Entrepreneurs who can identify these problems and develop software solutions may find opportunities to build subscription-based businesses.

The rise of AI-assisted coding tools has lowered barriers to entry, allowing people with limited programming experience to create and test software products.

Many software businesses can begin with a single solution addressing a specific challenge before expanding into broader platforms that serve larger markets.

6. Baby Gear Rental Service for Travellers

Travelling with young children often requires carrying equipment such as cots, playpens and high chairs.

A baby gear rental service allows families to rent these items at their destination instead of transporting them.

The business is particularly suited to locations that receive regular tourist traffic. Entrepreneurs can manage bookings, deliveries and collections during selected hours each week while keeping operating costs under control.

Industry forecasts indicate continued growth in the baby equipment rental market, creating opportunities for new entrants.

7. Small-Business Compliance Consulting

Regulatory requirements continue to present challenges for many small businesses.

Companies must comply with labour laws, reporting obligations and local regulations, yet many lack the resources to monitor changes and complete paperwork efficiently.

Compliance consultants help businesses understand requirements, prepare documentation and avoid penalties.

The work can often be scheduled around other commitments, making it suitable for part-time entrepreneurs. As the client base expands, consultants can introduce automated systems and training services to support additional growth.

WHY FG'S PLAN TO SCRAP 'IRRELEVANT' COURSES MISSES THE ROOT CAUSE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

CHARLES OGWO



For many students, choosing a university course is a major step toward building a career.

Little wonder the federal government's plan to scrap some university courses has generated widespread interest and concern. From admission opportunities to employment prospects, the move could have far-reaching implications for current and prospective students.

A federal government proposal to scrap certain university courses is seen by many stakeholders as a move ill-conceived and could deepen the country's skills crisis rather than resolve it.

Recall that Tunji Alausa, the minister of education, had earlier indicated that the government was considering scrapping what he described as 'irrelevant' courses, particularly in the social sciences, arguing that graduates of such programmes were swelling the unemployment queue rather than contributing to the economy.

But critics say the minister's position oversimplifies a far more complex problem rooted in structural economic weakness, not course selection.

Sola Kayode, a civil servant, said, "Unemployment cuts across all disciplines in Nigeria, including Law, Medicine, Computer Science, Banking and Finance, and Engineering, singling out some courses misses the point entirely."

Similarly, Friday Erhabor, director of media and strategies at Marklenez Limited, said that it is wrong for the government to start scrapping courses.

"No course is useless. They should rather upgrade courses to reflect contemporary realities. Let prospective students have the right to choose what they want to read.

"Everybody can't be a doctor or engineer. We also need historians and archaeologists. No course is completely useless," he said.



Christopher Nmeribe, an educationist, believes the federal government may be addressing a symptom rather than the root cause of unemployment.

“Graduates are often unemployed not simply because of the courses they studied, but because of limited job opportunities, weak industrial growth, and a disconnect between education and industry needs.

“Rather than scrapping courses, it may be more beneficial to reform and modernise them, strengthen practical and entrepreneurial training, and align curricula with current and future labour market demands,” he said.

WEF data contradicts the minister’s position

Data from the World Economic Forum (WEF) appear to undercut the minister’s argument. The WEF ranks analytical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving among the most in-demand global skills, competencies closely associated with social science training.

Nigeria’s own job market platforms show growing demand in consulting, development, finance, policy, media, and digital services, sectors where social science graduates play central roles alongside technical professionals.

Social science graduates have also contributed meaningfully to policy formulation and economic development, analysts note, adding that the minister’s framing fails to account for the cross-disciplinary nature of modern employment.

Capacity constraints overlooked

Critics further argue that the government has not addressed a key structural reality: existing universities lack the capacity to absorb additional students into the courses it deems ‘relevant.’

Many students who fail to secure admission to study Law, for instance, opt for Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, or Mass Communication under the proposed reforms; they could face elimination.

A significant number of these graduates have gone on to distinguished careers in public service, business, and the international arena.

There is also the growing phenomenon of STEM graduates moving into social science roles due to limited opportunities in their primary fields, a trend that suggests demand for social science competencies is rising, not falling.



Calls for curriculum reform, not elimination

Rather than scrapping courses, stakeholders are urging the government to update outdated curricula to reflect current global and industrial realities.

Erhabor emphasised that what is needed to make some of those courses that the minister tagged as irrelevant become relevant is the upgrading or updating of the curriculum.

“The problem is not that certain courses are irrelevant; it’s that university curricula are not sufficiently aligned with industry needs. That is a very different problem, and it requires a very different solution,” he noted.

An obvious fact remains that Nigeria’s university system was modelled on the British and American systems, both of which continue to offer the courses the minister has described as irrelevant.

The United Kingdom and the United States have instead focused on curriculum modernisation and interdisciplinary programming, an approach analysts say Nigeria should adopt.

Nmeribe emphasised that universities exist not only to produce workers but also to advance knowledge, research, culture, and critical thinking.

“The focus should therefore be on improving the quality and relevance of education while creating an economy that can absorb graduates.

“As the saying goes, a nation does not advance by narrowing the scope of knowledge available to its citizens; it advances by creating opportunities for knowledge to be applied productively,” he noted.

Stakeholders are also calling on vice-chancellors, rectors, and provosts to resist any policy directive to eliminate courses, and to advocate instead for broader rationalisation that gives programmes a more contemporary outlook.

Beyond employment

Analysts further point out that not all academic pursuits are driven by employment considerations. A businessperson may study Political Science to better understand governance. A traditional ruler may return to school for Sociology.

A law enforcement officer may pursue psychology for professional development. Restricting access to these courses would deprive individuals of legitimate avenues for self-improvement.

“A course deemed irrelevant today may become critical tomorrow.

“In an era of expanding knowledge and interdisciplinary study, Nigeria cannot afford to narrow its academic offering,” analysts say.

THE 10 BEST UNIVERSITIES IN THE WORLD FOR 2026

CHARLES OGWO



From groundbreaking research and world-class faculty to influential alumni networks and global prestige, the world's leading universities continue to shape the future.

The 2026 rankings highlight the institutions that are excelling across academics, innovation, and student experience.

Here are the 10 best universities in the world for 2026.

The University of Oxford

The University of Oxford retains the number one spot for the tenth consecutive year, driven by strong research environment score.

Oxford is the oldest university in the English-speaking world and the world's second oldest surviving university.

The University of Oxford students number around 22,000 in total, just over half of whom are undergraduates while over 40 percent are international, representing 140 countries between them.

In the 2026 World University Rankings, Oxford has overall-98.2; Teaching-97.2; Research Environment-100; Research Quality-97.7; Industry-99.9; and International Outlook-96.4.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is an independent, coeducational, private research university based in the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

It was established in 1861, and aims to 'further knowledge and prepare students in science, technology and other fields of study that will best benefit the nation and the world today'. Its motto is 'Mind and Hand'.

The university is ranked second in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2026. It has Arts and Humanities ranked first, Business and Economics ranked first, and Computer Science 2026 at fourth, among others.

It has rankings overall-97.7, Teaching-99.2, Research Environment-95.3, Research Quality-99.6, Industry-100, and International Outlook-91.9.



Princeton University

Princeton is one of the oldest universities in the US and is regarded as one of the world's most illustrious higher education institutions.

Founded in 1746 as the College of New Jersey, it was officially renamed Princeton University in 1896 in honour of the area where it is based, opening its famous graduate school in 1900.

Its student body is relatively small, with fewer than 10,000 in total, and international students make up 12 percent of undergraduates.

In the Times Higher Education World University Ranking, Princeton scored overall 97.2, Teaching 98.2, Research Environment 97.3, Research Quality 99, Industry 98, and International Outlook 85.4.



University of Cambridge

The University of Cambridge is rich in history, and its famous colleges and university buildings attract visitors from all over the world.

But the University's museums and collections also hold many treasures which give an exciting insight into some of the scholarly activities, both past and present, of the University's academics and students.

According to QS World University Rankings 2026, the University of Cambridge ranks sixth with overall score at 97.2.



Harvard University

Harvard University is a private Ivy League research university in Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States. Founded in 1636, and named Harvard College in 1639 in honour of its first benefactor, Puritan clergyman John Harvard, it is the oldest institution of higher learning in the United States.

Harvard University is ranked fifth by both QS World University Rankings and the Times Higher Education. Harvard University's fees ranges around \$16,590 for accommodation and \$4,180 for food; transport costs \$1,070, while utilities cost \$2,930.





Stanford University

Leland Stanford Junior University, commonly referred to as Stanford University, is a private research university in Stanford, California, United States.

It was founded in 1885 by railroad magnate Leland Stanford and his wife, Jane, in memory of their only child, Leland Jr.

Stanford University is ranked third in QS World Universities Rankings. The university's mission of discovery and learning is energised by a spirit of optimism and possibility that dates to its founding.

At Stanford you will find a place of intellectual expansiveness, wide-ranging perspectives, and freedom to explore new lines of thinking. Buzzing with ideas and innovation, approaching questions with openness and curiosity, pursuing excellence in all it does, this is Stanford.

California Institute of Technology (Caltech)

The California Institute of Technology is a private research university in Pasadena, California, United States.

The university is responsible for many modern scientific advancements and is among a small group of institutes of technology in the United States that are devoted to the instruction of pure and applied sciences.

It is ranked seventh by the Times Higher Education World Universities Rankings.

Imperial College London

The Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine is a public research university in London.

It is a world top ten university with an international reputation for excellence in teaching and research. Consistently rated amongst the world's best universities, Imperial College is committed to developing the next generation of researchers, scientists and academics through collaboration across disciplines.

University of California, Berkeley (UCB)

The University of California, Berkeley is a public land-grant research university in the Southside and Northside neighborhoods of Berkeley, California, United States.

Founded in 1868, the university is a public research university and the flagship institution of the ten research universities affiliated with the University of California system.

Yale University

Yale University is a private Ivy League research university in New Haven, Connecticut, United States. Founded in 1701, Yale is the third-oldest institution of higher education in the United States.

It is one of the nine colonial colleges chartered before the American Revolution.

INSIDE NYSC ORDEALS, DRIVING CORPS MEMBERS TO SPEAK OUT

CHARLES OGWO



When Beatrice Okoh (not her real name) packed her bags for the National Youth Service Corps orientation camp earlier this year, she carried with her the excitement of a fresh graduate ready to serve her country.

What she did not pack for, and could not have anticipated, was sleeping outdoors for two nights, turned away from overcrowded halls, still unregistered two days after arrival, and waiting months for allowances she was legally owed. Her story is not unique.

For a growing number of Nigerian graduates, the NYSC year, long celebrated as a rite of passage for national integration and personal development, has quietly become a season of financial strain, logistical chaos, and unmet promises.

As frustrations deepen across orientation camps and service states, corps members are breaking their silence.

Tension mounted at the Lagos State NYSC orientation camp earlier this year when several corps members voiced frustration over what they described as a poorly managed pluralisation policy that triggered confusion and hardship.

BusinessDay gathered that the camp was severely overcrowded, forcing authorities to transfer some corps members to orientation camps in Ogun, Osun, and Kwara States.

A female corps member, who spoke on condition of anonymity and was reposted to the Sagamu camp in Ogun State, said members transferred from Lagos were denied kits on arrival.

Camp managers, she said, cited insufficient stock to accommodate the added numbers, even as those originally posted to Ogun received their kits without delay. "We didn't anticipate the number of people we have here, and we don't have enough kits for everyone now," one camp coordinator reportedly said.



More worrisome was that the Lagos State NYSC managers refused to respond to BusinessDay when contacted via phone call.

Multiple Batch A1 corps members described the Lagos camp experience as overwhelming. One recounted being forced to sleep outside due to a shortage of indoor space.

“The place is overcrowded, no room to keep corps members. We’re outside, no room to sleep. It took me two days to complete my registration,” he said.

The chaos was not lost on parents. One father, whose child was initially posted to Lagos before being transferred to Ogun, said the situation reflected a failure of federal responsibility.

“I think the government is failing in its responsibilities. We did not anticipate this kind of horror,” he said, recalling his own smoother experience at an NYSC camp in Niger State decades ago.

“If the government does not have the capacity to retain the NYSC scheme, they should scrap it. There are a lot of things going on there which were not the case during our own time,” he added.

Others noted the problem is not limited to Lagos. “It happens in almost all the camps across Nigeria. I experienced the same ugly situation in Katsina before we were moved into hostels,” one former corps member said.

Beyond the camps, the financial burden weighs heavily on those already in service. A serving corps member told BusinessDay that while the federal government has been

consistent with its monthly stipend, several state governments have fallen far short of their obligations.

“The federal government has never missed a month for us, and I truly appreciate that. But please, how does a state government allow someone to serve for almost 12 months and only pay five months’ allowance? What happened to the remaining seven months?” she asked.

She described the inequity as particularly demoralising. “What hurts more is seeing some corps members paid completely while others are ignored; meanwhile, we are all doing the same NYSC service, attending CDS, clearance, and spending money on transportation every single week.”

The N15,000 monthly state allowance, she noted, may be modest, but its non-payment compounds daily hardship. “Transport alone is draining. Going to PPA, CDS, and handling daily expenses is not easy at all. It is honestly tiring and unfair. NYSC is already stressful enough without having to beg for what you are entitled to.”

Her conclusion was blunt: “I can’t wait to be done with this service year because the system really needs to do better for corps members.”

Nigeria introduced the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) on May 22, 1973, through Decree No. 24, under the military administration of General Yakubu Gowon as the head of state.

The scheme was established in the aftermath of the devastating Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970) with the primary goal of reconstructing, reconciling, and rebuilding the country.

The devastating conflict left Nigeria heavily divided along ethnic, religious, and regional lines.



THE INFORMAL SYSTEMS THAT RUN AFRICA

EKEMINI AKPAKPAN

Many people may never have heard me talk about my mother in this light, so you might need to take a seat because this is a reflective one.

My mother was a member of Women in Nigeria (WIN), one of Nigeria's pioneering feminist and activist movements, founded in 1982 by women such as Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie, Ayesha Imam, Bilkisu Yusuf, and others who believed that women's experiences could not be separated from the social, economic, and political systems around them. But this is not really a story about WIN.

It is a story about the moments I watched my mother try to navigate a system she could see, but could not always name. Growing up in our deeply religious home, I remember her asking questions that made many people uncomfortable. Why, she would ask, did so many rules seem designed specifically for women? Why did religious leaders concern themselves with the size of a woman's gele? Why were women's movements, voices, appearances, and ambitions so frequently subject to scrutiny?

At the time, I did not fully understand what she was wrestling with. Today, I think I do. Because what my mother was questioning were not individual rules. She was questioning systems. And systems are often most powerful when they become invisible.

When we think about inequality, we often think about formal institutions: laws, constitutions, policies, government agencies, and courts. These matter. Across Africa, many of these formal systems have evolved significantly. Constitutions increasingly recognize equality. Governments adopt gender policies and ratify charters. Regional bodies sign protocols and frameworks promoting inclusion. Yet despite these advances, many women still struggle to translate their potential into economic power, leadership, ownership, and opportunity. Why?

Because Africa is governed not only by its formal institutions. It is also governed by informal systems. The unwritten rules, inherited norms, cultural expectations, religious interpretations, family structures, and community sanctions. The invisible incentives that shape who owns, who leads, who inherits, who speaks, who negotiates, and ultimately, who thrives. These informal systems rarely appear in policy documents, yet they often determine development outcomes more powerfully than the policies themselves. And nowhere is this more visible than in the lives of African women.

This article is dedicated partly to my mother, but also to the woman selling tomatoes in my village market who may never describe her experience as "structural inequality." It exists because of the graduate whose career choices are narrowed by expectations she did not create. It exists because of the entrepreneur who cannot access capital because she does not own land. It exists because of countless women whose potential remains trapped inside systems they did not design.

To understand why so many women remain concentrated in low-income and informal work across Africa, we must first understand the invisible systems that continue to govern economic life long after formal reforms have been introduced.

Informal Institutions and Women

The future of inclusive development may depend less on writing new rules and more on transforming the unwritten ones. Outcomes are rarely produced by formal institutions alone. They emerge from the interaction between formal rules and informal norms. A country may enact progressive laws, adopt gender policies, expand educational opportunities, and establish economic empowerment programmes. Yet if the informal institutions that govern everyday life remain unchanged, exclusion often persists beneath the surface.

This matters because much of Africa's economic and social life continues to be shaped by informal institutions: family systems, kinship structures, social norms, religious expectations, traditional authorities, and cultural definitions of appropriate roles for women and men. These institutions provide identity, belonging, social protection, and community cohesion. But they can also influence who owns assets, who controls time, who accesses opportunities, who accumulates wealth, and who is viewed as a legitimate leader.

Taken together, these systems can create what I increasingly see as an invisible architecture of exclusion. Consider how land is inherited, who performs unpaid care work, who is viewed as a legitimate leader, or what occupations are considered "appropriate" for women. The result is that women across Africa are often highly productive yet concentrated in informal economic activities with lower returns, fewer protections, and limited pathways to growth. They participate extensively in markets, farms, and community economies, but frequently remain excluded from the assets, capital, networks, and decision-making spaces that generate long-term economic power.

And perhaps this is one of the most important challenges for Africa's development agenda. We have become increasingly focused on reforming formal institutions, undermined by the informal ones.

What does Institutional Reform look like in Practice?

1. Property Rights: What the Law Says vs What the Community Practices

Formal institution: Many African countries now recognize women's rights to own, inherit, and control property.

Informal institution: Customary inheritance systems often continue to privilege male lineage ownership, treating women as temporary family members.

What this means for development: Women's economic participation is constrained not by effort, but by asset ownership. Strengthening women's effective control of productive assets must therefore become as important as legal reform itself. Rwanda and Kenya's joint land titling initiatives demonstrate how formalizing co-ownership can strengthen women's access to credit and investment opportunities.

2. Labour Markets: What Economies Need vs What Gender Norms Expect

Formal institution: Governments promote labour force participation, entrepreneurship, and economic inclusion.

Informal institution: Women continue to shoulder a disproportionate share of unpaid care, from childcare to household management.

What this means for development: The challenge is no longer access to finance alone, but access to growth capital. In parts of East Africa, fintech platforms have begun using Chama transaction histories as alternative credit scores, enabling women to access larger formal loans without traditional land collateral.

3. Financial Inclusion: What Markets Offer vs What Women Can Access

Formal institution: Financial systems promote inclusion through banking services, credit schemes, and enterprise financing.

Informal institution: Many women continue to rely on Esusu, Ajo, Chamas, and other community savings networks because formal barriers remain high.

What this means for development: The challenge is no longer access to finance alone, but access to growth capital. In parts of East Africa, fintech platforms have begun using Chama transaction histories as alternative credit scores, enabling women to access larger formal loans without traditional land collateral.

4. Governance: Who Makes Decisions vs Who Influences Them

Formal institution: Constitutions and public institutions are designed to distribute authority and protect rights.

Informal institution: Traditional authorities, customary councils, and religious structures continue to shape resource access and dispute resolution.

What this means for development: Inclusive governance must extend beyond formal representation into the informal institutions where many economic decisions are still made. In parts of South Africa and Malawi, development programmes have worked directly with traditional leaders to include women in customary land and dispute-resolution processes, helping to strengthen women's economic rights at the community level.

5. Opportunity: What Talent Can Do vs What Society Expects

Formal institution: Educational systems increasingly encourage women to participate across professions and industries.

Informal institution: Gender expectations continue to channel women toward a narrow range of socially acceptable occupations.

What this means for development: Expanding opportunity requires creating deliberate pathways into high-growth sectors. Nigeria's recent decision by the Nigerian Air Force to extend its absorption policy to graduates of the Air Force Girls' Military School illustrates how institutional reform can open leadership and career pathways that were previously reserved for men.

Final Thoughts

My mother's curiosity sparked mine, and it is in moments like this that I find fulfilment applying my institutional strengthening expertise to gender transformation, in the hope that one or more of these solutions may ultimately be adopted at the institutional and systemic level.

Over the years, I have had many conversations with friends who are economists, politicians, public and private sector governance practitioners, and development professionals. Each tends to approach development from a different angle. Economists focus on markets. Politicians focus on power. Governance practitioners focus on institutions/policies. Civil society focuses on people. Yet real lives are lived at the intersection of all four.

That is why I believe Africa's next development breakthrough lies in interrogating the space where formal institutions meet informal ones; where laws meet norms, where policies meet culture, and where economic opportunities meet the realities of everyday life, to enable people, especially women, to fully realise their potential.

AFRICAN ART AFTER THE ONLINE ALGORITHM

Seen online. Overlooked in history.

Consider a paradox that has quietly taken shape across African art circles over the past several years: some of the most talked-about African artists online are not always the most significant within the ecosystems where they actually work.

And some whose practices have genuinely reshaped conversations in studios, at biennales, and in curatorial discourse barely register in the recommendation engines that now govern how most people find art.

This gap between visibility and cultural weight is not new to art history. But it is widening, and the mechanisms widening it are largely invisible to the audiences they shape.

The platforms that have become central to how art circulates globally, Instagram foremost among them, were not designed with artistic complexity in mind.

They were designed for attention. And attention, as it turns out, favours certain things: bold colour, recognisable form, a face, and a narrative legible within three seconds of scrolling.

These qualities can absolutely coexist with serious artistic inquiry.

Many extraordinary African artists also make visually immediate work. But many do not, and therein lies a structural problem that the art world has been slow to name plainly.

In this digest, we will explore how algorithms, platforms, and digital discovery tools are reshaping who gets seen, collected, and ultimately remembered within African art.

TOP PICKS FROM OUR COLLECTION



This digest is brought to you by Patrons MCAA. Think African art, think Patrons. Patrons is Africa's leading art advisory and dealership firm with deep expertise in African art, helping private and corporate art collectors diversify their wealth through art collection, appraisal, packaging & transportation, storage, insurance, maintenance, and restoration. Purchase or general inquiry? Reach out: art@patronsmcaa.com.



Title: Team Work □ Artist: Lucky Isiah □ Medium: Acrylic on canvas □ Dimension: 33.5 x 24 in | 85 x 61 cm □ Available on Request



Title: Resolute II (Layers of Reality Series) □ Artist: Raji Mohammed □ Medium: Acrylic on canvas □ Dimension: 36.2 x 36.2 in | 92 x 92 cm □ Available on Request



Title: Play & Caution □ Artist: O'dare Adenuga □ Medium: Acrylic on canvas □ Dimension: 48 x 36.2 in | 122 x 92 cm □ Available on Request

1. Visibility Has Changed, But Has Access?

There is genuine cause for optimism. A sculptor in Accra can now build a following in Seoul. A photographer in Nairobi can sell prints to a São Paulo collector without Western gallery mediation. According to the Art Basel & UBS Global Art Market Report, digital sales represented 17% of global art sales in 2024 – significantly above pre-pandemic levels, with 46% of those purchases going to first-time collectors.

But as of 2025, only 38% of Africa's population has internet access. Artists embedded in Lagos, Nairobi, or Cape Town benefit most. Those working in Tamale, secondary Kenyan cities, or towns with unreliable connectivity face structural disadvantages that no hashtag strategy will resolve.

2. When Algorithms Become Cultural Gatekeepers

Instagram rewards saves, shares, and rapid early engagement — signals that systematically favour work with immediate visual impact over work that accumulates meaning slowly. A monumental textile installation requiring physical presence doesn't compete with a

portrait that reads beautifully at thumbnail size. Archival, conceptual, and community-embedded practices — the kind that define some of the continent's most serious artistic inquiry — are quietly penalised. Research into digital art platforms in Nigeria and Kenya identified what one academic study called “algorithm-induced visibility biases”, finding niche art forms under-represented within recommendation systems, even where connectivity is not the barrier. The problem is the design logic itself.

3. Which Artists Are Easier To Find, And Which Are Not?

Digital visibility within African art clusters around specific cities, markets, and languages. An artist documented primarily in Wolof, Amharic, or Lingala faces an additional layer of invisibility — search engines built around English and French are simply not equipped to surface their work. Artists represented by well-connected galleries, featured in internationally publicised biennales, and reviewed in high-ranking publications hold a compounding structural advantage. What remains genuinely hard to find is work that lives primarily outside formal institutional circuits — community-rooted, orally transmitted, locally significant but digitally silent

4. Why Human Curators Still Matter

Publications like Contemporary And (C&) and Cape Town-based journal Chimurenga exist precisely because curatorial intelligence cannot be reduced to engagement metrics. Zeitz MOCAA, the largest museum of contemporary African art, has since 2017 committed to collecting and preserving work that recommendation engines would never surface. In 2024, Nigerian startup Atsur partnered with Nigeria's National Gallery of Art to digitise and archive the national collection — painstaking, unglamorous work invisible to any algorithm but essential to the long-term historical record.

5. The Archive Problem

As younger researchers increasingly rely on digital tools for discovery, work that was significant within communities, debated in studios, and shown at regional biennales but undocumented in English-language publications with strong digital presences risks becoming harder to recover. This is not hypothetical. Colonial-era ethnographic frameworks once produced systematic distortions of the African artistic record. Digital-era recommendation logic is capable of reproducing those distortions through entirely different mechanisms, quietly and at scale.

Algorithms are very good at distributing what is already circulating. Recognising significance that hasn't yet been translated into the language of engagement has always been the work of critics, curators, archivists, and writers. The challenge for African art ecosystems is not whether to embrace digital tools; it is whether enough of that slower, human infrastructure can be sustained alongside them. Discovery and visibility are diverging. The historical record of one of the most creatively fertile periods in African art will reflect whichever one is invested in more seriously.



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

BRAND AMBASSADOR VS INFLUENCER: WHO DO YOU NEED FOR YOUR NEXT COLLABO?

FEYISITAN JIMAKINWA

A brand ambassador is someone who loves your brand and reps it with no monetary compensation but receives other incentives, like free products. An influencer collaborates with your brand for a limited-time campaign. Using both forms of marketing can benefit you in different ways.

Increasingly, I see companies swapping influencers with brand ambassadors. The need for long-term relationships as opposed to a one-off social media post is the most common argument I hear from them. And while, yes, brand ambassadors do typically form more long-term relationships with brands, I wouldn't dismiss working with influencers too.

What does a brand ambassador do?

A brand ambassador is someone who has a close-knit relationship with your brand and leverages any influence they have on social media (or their overall social circle) to let people know about it. Your brand ambassador will ideally be someone who already uses and loves your brand, even if they're someone with a small to medium following.

Brand ambassadors usually have a long-term relationship with the brand they're promoting, extending for, at least, a year. During that time, they will work on things that build brand awareness and showcases your product or service in the best light.

Most importantly, your collaboration with them could have other means of compensation than money. Free products, discount codes, and merchandise are all acceptable means of paying your brand ambassadors for their time and trouble.

What does an influencer do?

Social media influencers are a diverse group of content creators. They usually have a niche and a specific target audience, depending on the kind of content they create. From lifestyle, sport, and

fashion, to travel, education, hyper-specific food and diet influencers, your brand can find collaboration with one or more of them rewarding.

Types of Influencers

Influencers have widely varying degrees of reach and, well, influence. I would classify them thus:

Celebrities: Usually have a claim to fame outside of social media with multiple million followers. Their level of engagement with followers is usually low.

Mega influencers: The highest tier within any specific niche. They have a wide reach of multiple million followers but can also engage with their followers, even if not personally. This is usually done through a social media team that handles these interactions.

Macro influencers: The following tier within a niche, with a following of 100k up to 1 million followers. They can be considered well-known within their niche but are usually obscure outside of it.

Micro influencers: They have a relatively smaller following of 10k up to 100k.

Nano influencers: These usually have a few thousand followers but boast the highest levels of engagement with their audience.

An influencer usually uses their platform to share content relevant to their niche and, subsequently, highlights products and services their target audience might be interested in. This makes influencer programmes a super effective marketing strategy to directly address the audience your brand needs to reach. Even though these campaigns are usually short-lived, they can boost sales for specific merchandise drops or increase engagement when you need them to.

Strategies for effective collaboration
Here are some tips I recommend for working with influencers and brand ambassadors:

For Brand ambassadors

-Choose someone who loves your brand
Choosing brand ambassadors who already know and love your product or service gets you over halfway there, as they know what to say to make your brand look good.

-Create better incentives

Most brand ambassadors don't need to be paid to represent your brand, especially if they've been doing it out of their own volition before you pop into the picture.

I personally think being generous with the incentives you offer helps you create a rewarding environment for your collaboration, making your partners more willing to continue with it in the long run. Also, it could incentivise others to join your ambassadorship programme

-Be Involved in the Process

Once you finalise the agreement, a brand ambassador will usually take over with the kind of content they usually make, requiring your sign-off only when necessary. But if you're a smaller brand and you have the means to be more involved in formulating the content they share, go for it.

For Influencers

a.Pick your collaborator according to brand values

You might know the general audience you're aiming for, but you need to pinpoint how you can reach them effectively and without creating too much negativity. Not all influencers are the right fit for your brand, even if they're within the same niche you're targeting. Collaborating with someone who doesn't represent your brand's values or has too much controversy surrounding them can do more harm than good.

b.Legal and ethical considerations

For a fruitful collaboration, there are a few legal and ethical aspects worth clearing up at the very beginning. These include:

Disclosure: Your collaborators must fully disclose the nature of your partnership to avoid legal action against the brand ambassador or influencer.

Scope of work: You should be clear about what the agreement entitles you to "control" about the influencer's content promoting your brand.

Term: This clarifies how long the agreement stands.
Compensation: This outlines what the ambassador or influencer receives in exchange for their services.

Exclusivity: This delineates how long the influencer should exclusively promote your product.

Grounds for contract termination: This clause pinpoints specific instances that lead to contract termination without further compensation. It's better to include every scenario that can lead to this outcome to avoid litigation for breach of contract.

LAST LINE

Working with an influencer on a short-term campaign can provide value to your brand that outweighs your initial investment. However, there's no denying that a long-term relationship with a brand ambassador with a relevant target audience is necessary for a consistent influx of conversions from their audience.



FEYISITAN IJIMAKINWA

Feyisitan Ijimakinwa is a Reputation and Perception Management expert. He is a prolific writer and researcher who, at different times, served as Head of Corporate Communications of top brands quoted on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. A versatile communications specialist, he practiced extensively as a print journalist and was variously engaged in the broadcast media, working on radio and television. Feyisitan continues to write on corporate communications, brand reputation and perception management, and brand intelligence, among others. He organises the 'Brand Intelligence and the Marketplace' masterclass. Feyisitan advocates a pollution free and sustainable environment

TABLES TURNED

UDY OSARO-EDOBOR

Mege had always loved peace. He was the kind of man who avoided unnecessary trouble and believed that life was easier when people minded their business. So when he finally brought his fiancée home to meet his family, he was happy and excited. He thought everyone would see what he saw in her.

But his older sister Kiru did not like Ene the moment she laid eyes on her.

Ene was tall, dark and exceptionally beautiful. She carried herself with quiet confidence and had a graceful presence that naturally drew attention. She was not loud and did not seek validation from anyone, yet people respected her. There was something about her calm nature that unsettled Kiru.

Kiru had always been an unpleasant woman. She had a habit of seeing problems where there were none and had mastered the art of making people uncomfortable. Nothing pleased her for too long. She had been married twice, and both marriages had ended badly. Many people believed that her difficult character had played a major role in the collapse of her homes.

She had two daughters from her previous marriages and unfortunately, they had picked up many of her bad habits. Discipline was almost nonexistent in their lives. They had little respect for people and believed that the world somehow owed them special treatment.

When Kiru found out that Ene was a chef, she almost laughed. She found it difficult to understand how someone like Ene could become successful through cooking. In her mind, cooking was too ordinary to produce the kind of wealth and comfort Ene enjoyed.

Kiru questioned her success. She created stories and dropped subtle insults. She spoke about women who called themselves chefs during the day but warmed people's beds at night. She could not understand how such a beautiful woman could simply be a cook and still be wealthy.

Deep inside, jealousy had already taken root. Kiru had spent years gathering degrees and qualifications. Yet life had not turned out the way she expected. Looking at Ene felt like looking at someone who had achieved effortlessly what she had struggled endlessly to get. Her insults slowly disappeared when she learned the truth. Omah was not just a chef. She was a third generation business owner. Her grandmother had built a successful restaurant business, her mother had expanded it and Omah had inherited both the business and the responsibility that came with it.

She had grown up around recipes, spices and family traditions. Cooking was not just a profession to her. It was her heritage.

Ene came from a happy home filled with love and peace. She valued stability and did not believe in unnecessary drama. At one point, she considered ending the relationship with Mege because she did not want family problems to become part of her marriage. Mege assured her repeatedly that she had

nothing to fear.

She trusted him. And with that promise in mind, she became his wife.

True to his word, Mege protected his wife from Kiru whenever necessary. He created boundaries and refused to allow his sister's bitterness to enter his home.

Ene also understood something important. Not every battle needed to be fought. She knew how to mind her business, focus on her family and stay in her lane.

Years passed peacefully.

They built a beautiful home together and had two sons. Their house was filled with warmth, laughter and the delicious aroma of food that constantly floated from the kitchen.

Then life changed. Ene became ill.

At first it looked manageable but with time her condition became worse. Day after day, her strength faded little by little. Still, whenever she had enough energy, she called her sons to sit with her in the kitchen. She taught them the family's secret spices, cooking techniques and recipes that had been passed down for generations.

Thankfully, the boys had always shown interest in cooking. They enjoyed spending time with their mother and naturally found their way around the kitchen. Slowly, she handed pieces of herself to them.

Eventually, Ene's body could no longer fight. She died. The pain was unbearable. Mege and the boys struggled deeply with her loss. Their home suddenly felt empty. But even in their grief, they found comfort in knowing that she was no longer suffering.

Then Kiru appeared.

No one really knew what she told Mege but somehow she managed to convince him to agree to an unusual arrangement. Soon, Kiru's daughters moved into Mege's house while his boys went to live with her.

People were confused.

Some thought Mege had lost his mind.

Others wondered if grief had affected his judgment.

If Kiru believed she was punishing Ene's children, she was terribly mistaken.

Mege's boys had grown up in comfort. Their lives had been easy. They had never lacked anything. Living with Kiru was a completely different experience.

Luxury disappeared overnight.

Comfort disappeared.

They experienced strict routines, responsibilities and realities they had never known.

At first it was difficult. But gradually something changed.

They learned patience. They learned that life was not always soft. Instead of complaining, they buried themselves in their academics.

They spent long hours studying and improving their mother's recipes. They experimented with flavors. They made mistakes. They learned. They created recipes of their own. Hardship sharpened them.

Meanwhile Kiru's daughters experienced the opposite. Moving into Mege's house felt like entering another world. Suddenly there was comfort. Suddenly there was money. Suddenly there were things they had only admired from a distance. Instead of appreciating it, they became careless. Money slowly distracted them. They started chasing trends, attention and appearances.

Their priorities changed. School became secondary. Discipline became unnecessary. They became more interested in showing off than building anything meaningful. Comfort made them lose focus.

Years later, when the boys finished high school and returned home, they had changed completely. They returned as young men their father looked at with pride. At around the same time, Kiru's daughters had graduated from university and returned to their mother. Ironically, Kiru wasn't looking forward to having them around. She knew they had become more difficult.

For the first time in years, she could no longer pretend that Ene had not done an excellent job on her sons. The boys were responsible, respectful and focused.

One attended a culinary school in Italy where he learned international cooking techniques and modern food presentation. Later, he returned home and attended a local culinary school to strengthen his understanding of indigenous dishes and traditions. He eventually earned a master's degree in business management.

His brother pursued hospitality and hotel management and later obtained a master's degree in a related field.

Their father stood solidly behind them. Together they took over their mother's business. Then they transformed it. The small family legacy became something much bigger. Branches expanded. New ideas were introduced. Traditional recipes met modern innovation.

Their mother's name became even greater in death than it had been in life. Kiru could not handle it. Jealousy consumed her. She blamed Mege for everything. She accused him of ruining her daughters. She shouted about how he had deliberately destroyed their future because he hated her. She complained that he did not watch over her girls the way she watched over his boys. She went on and on.

Then, for the first time, Mege's sons opened up. They told him about the difficult things they had experienced while living with Kiru. They spoke about the harsh treatment. The unnecessary punishments. The bitterness. The things they had kept hidden all those years.

Mege became upset. Very upset. But strangely, he also became grateful.

After Ene died, he had thrown himself into work because grief was eating him alive. He knew he would not have enough time for his sons because he'd be travelling a lot. So when Kiru suggested the arrangement, he immediately understood her

intentions.

He knew exactly what she was trying to do. But he accepted anyway.

He had asked her repeatedly if she was certain and she had said yes every single time. No one forced her. It was her idea.

She thought she was creating suffering for Ene's children. Instead, she created a training ground. She believed hardship would break them. Instead, it built them. She thought comfort would benefit her daughters. Instead, it weakened them.

Life had quietly exchanged the lessons.

The children she wanted to destroy grew stronger. The children she wanted to elevate lost their direction.

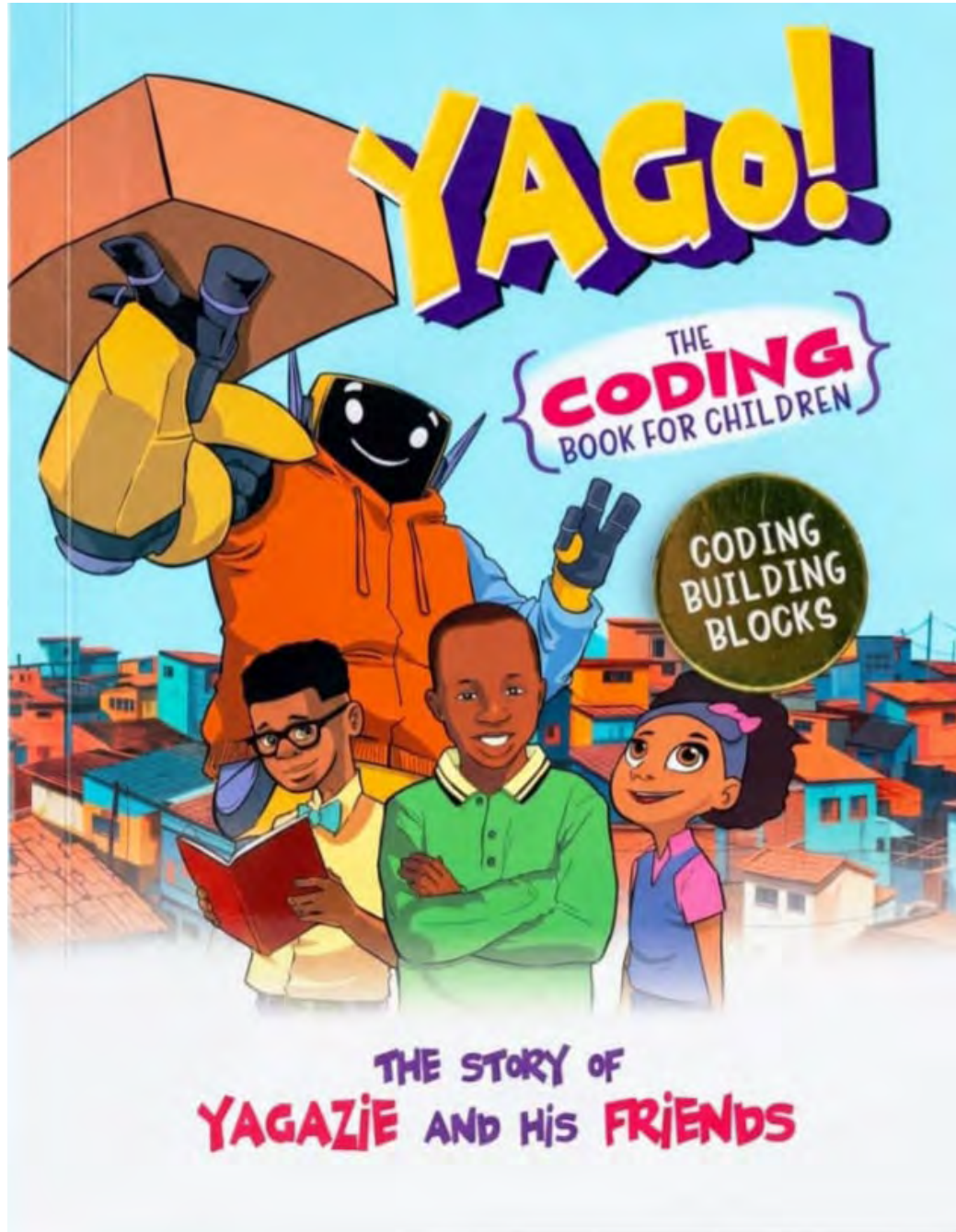
Some people spend their lives trying to dig holes for others. What they forget is that sometimes they are also standing at the edge of that same hole.



Udy Osaro-Edobor

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An Interactive Journey into the Heart of Coding-A Review of Akinyele Olubodun's Yago

Title: Yago! The Coding Book for Children
Author: Akinyele Olubodun
Year of Publication: 2025
Number of Pages: 172
Category: Children's Book

YAGO! THE CODING BOOK FOR CHILDREN

TITILADE OYEMADE

You can immediately tell that Akinyele Olubodun poured a great deal of passion, creativity, and genuine effort into Yago!. Even before opening the first page, the book already makes a strong impression. The cover is bright, beautiful, and highly creative, the kind of design that instantly captures a child's attention. It reflects not only the imagination behind the story but also the author's artistic talent beyond just teaching coding.

The subtitle is another clever and intentional touch. It immediately draws in any child with even the slightest curiosity about coding or technology. In a world where children are increasingly exposed to digital skills, Yago! feels both timely and relevant, offering an exciting entry point into programming. From the very beginning of the book, you can feel the author's excitement, and that energy naturally transfers to the reader. There is a genuine passion in the storytelling that creates curiosity and keeps the reader engaged, eager to continue turning the pages.

Interestingly, the book title is also the name of one of its main characters. The story quickly introduces Yago, who immediately becomes the centre of attention. We are also told about another important character, Yagazie, yet the author chooses not to reveal exactly who Yagazie is from the outset. Instead, the character is mentioned repeatedly without being fully introduced, leaving readers curious and searching for clues.

Whether this is a deliberate storytelling technique or not, it works well in creating intrigue. As the story unfolds, readers find themselves trying to piece together Yagazie's identity while following Yago's journey. This gradual unveiling of characters adds a sense of mystery to the book and keeps readers engaged, eager to discover how the different pieces of the story fit together.

What makes the book particularly strong is how approachable and inviting it feels. Rather than presenting coding as something difficult or intimidating, it transforms it into a fun, guided, and adventurous learning experience. Even readers who do not initially have an interest in coding may find themselves drawn in simply because of how easy the content is.

The visual presentation plays a major role in this appeal. The images, font style, layout, and overall design all contribute to a warm and engaging learning environment. There is something about the physical feel of the book that makes it enjoyable to hold which further enhances the reading experience.

One of the book's strongest qualities is its clarity. The author avoids unnecessary complexity and ensures that instructions are simple and direct. Every concept is supported with clear visuals, making it easier for young readers to follow along without confusion. The pacing is slow and deliberate, giving kids enough time to absorb each idea properly before moving forward.

Another standout feature is how interactive the book is. Readers are encouraged to practise as they read, rather than waiting until the end of a chapter. This makes the experience more engaging

and hands-on. At times, it begins to feel like being in a classroom setting where a teacher is guiding you step by step through each concept. As the book progresses, the level of difficulty gradually increases.

Early sections introduce simple ideas, while later sections become more challenging. This steady progression allows both Yago and the readers to develop together, building confidence and understanding over time.

Because of this structure, the book cannot be rushed. It requires patience, focus, and consistent attention. The best way to engage with it is to take it one chapter at a time, allowing each lesson to fully sink in. If rushed, the depth of learning may be lost.

This book is highly versatile in how it can be used. It works effectively in a classroom setting as a structured workbook where teachers guide students through exercises. It is equally useful at home, where parents can support their children and work through the activities together, making learning more interactive and meaningful.

One important consideration is that children who struggle with arithmetic may need additional guidance, as some sections assume a level of comfort with basic numeracy. With support, however, these challenges can be managed, and the learning experience remains rewarding.

Overall, Yago! is a thoughtfully designed educational book that successfully combines creativity, structure, and engagement. It is not only a tool for learning coding but also an experience that nurtures curiosity, patience, and problem-solving skills in young readers.



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WEEKENDER

MOVIE REVIEW

NEMESIS (2026)

If you are looking for an exciting action packed series that will be worth every bit of your time, right from episode 1 to 8, look no further. I was thrilled and I couldn't wait to get to the end and when I did, I wanted more. Coltrane Wilder was a young, vibrant, and handsome guy, who was known for his elegance, wealth, and philanthropy. No one could really tell what he did for a living but he worked different businesses and cars. On the other hand, there was a very handsome sharp cop called Isaiah Stiles; he was a diligent police officer who loved his work so much. He had lost two (2) of his colleagues and would not stop till he caught the culprits. For some weird reasons he knew Coltrane was not innocent but he had no strong backing evidence to prove it. Well, you will need to go check out this movie to ding out if Isaiah was right or wrong and if he finally caught the bad guys. The 8 episodes (58 minutes per episode) was created by Courtney A Kemp, Tani Marole and they featured actors like Matthew Law, Cleopatra Coleman, Y'lan Noel, Gabriella Dennis, Domenick Lombardozzi, Stephenie Sigman, Ariana Guerra, Jeff Pierre, Micheal Potts, Cedric Joe, Moe Irvin, Sydney Mitchell, etc.



KILLER (2024)

I was super thrilled and excited to jump on this new action movie on Netflix. For some reasons, I just didn't see this movie earlier but I was glad I did this weekend. Zee was the best hand they had, she was a perfectionist, one known for her skills; smooth, clean, and precise. She never misses her target. One day, Zee was sent on a mission to bring down some bad guys, and during the mission, she accidentally causes a young female musician to go blind. This made her feel very bad and she decided to protect this young girl at every cost even up to the point of fighting against her colleagues and boss. You will need to go check out this fantastic action packed movie to see how Zee protected Jenn and how she fought to save her life. It was funny who she worked with to bring down her boss. This 126minutes martial arts, action, crime, drama, thriller movie was directed by John Woo. They featured actors like Nathalie Emmanuel, Omar Sy, Sam Worthington, Diana Silvers, Said Taghmaoul, Angeles Woo, Eric Cantona, Tcheky Karyo, Gregory Montel, Hugo Diego Garcia, Micheal Erpiedling, Aurelia Agel, and many more.



THE 15:17 TO PARIS (2018)

If you enjoy movies based on true life stories, then this will be worth your while as they told a story of 3 friends who went off their way to save many lives. In my head, I was wondering what the odds were that they would embark on that train on that day and at the same time. Growing up, these three friends were like rebels in school and caused their parents and teachers stress they thought that they will amount to nothing but, they all went on to doing great in life and 2 of them joined the military which gave them the edge and training they used on that day of the crisis. You will need to go check out the movie to see how they saved hundreds of lives on that faithful day in Paris. The 93min military films, drama, films based on books, based on real life was directed by clint Eastwood, they featured actors like Alek Skarlates, Anthony Sadler, Spencer Stone, Ray Corasani, Judy Gers, Jenna Fischer, Irene White, Willian Jenys, Bryce Cheiser and Mayna.



WEEKEND QUOTES



1

Breathe the newness of now
.....WhispersbyTEN

2

Choosing to follow Jesus Christ;
you won't be sorry; you will be
saved
.....WhispersbyTEN

3

Let your weapon be: "It is
written". Therefore, sharpen it.
.....WhispersbyTEN

4

The one who lives at the
extreme of heaven, we bow
before you.
.....WhispersbyTEN