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Forbes AFRICA

DECEMBER 2020 | JANUARY 2021



SPECIAL ISSUE

African Of The Year

NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA

FIGHTING FOR EQUAL ACCESS TO THE COVID-19 VACCINE AND HELPING AFRICA ADVANCE ON THE WORLD STAGE

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Early this year, at the inception of the Covid-19 pandemic, Malawi was also battling for democracy. When Lazarus Chakwera became President in June, his win was hailed as a victory for democracy and justice. Born in Lilongwe to a subsistence farmer, the philosophy and theology graduate leads a nine-party coalition, the Tonse Alliance. He spoke to FORBES AFRICA in this exclusive interview about taking on the reins during the pandemic and his plans for the country's future.

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2020. Unexpected. Unprecedented. The year a virus tore through the core of our being, and assailed our health systems and the wellbeing of our economies. Its effects ricocheted through every street, every alley of South Africa. FORBES AFRICA trained its lens on the new reality the year is leaving behind.

Words and Photographs: Motlabana Monnakgotla and Chanel Retief

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Only 27, Ofentse Pitse owns and conducts an orchestra in South Africa, rewriting the soundtrack for the region's abundant though overlooked musical talent. But the pandemic has made performing together a logistical conundrum.

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NOT FOR SALE

DIGICLOUD AFRICA AND INCENTRO – DIGITALLY TRANSFORMING AFRICA

Cloud is expected to generate an incremental $2 billion in top line revenue for cloud providers in Africa over the next five years (The Rise of the African Cloud Markets, 2019)

Addressing the growing digital and work transformation needs of organisations has become essential for any business operating in the African technology space. Working with a strong enablement partner creates organisations that deliver the maximum impact potential to customers in the cloud market.

Digicloud Africa is Google's chosen enablement partner in Africa, supporting partners by providing the necessary training, tools and resources needed to successfully implement cloud solutions and support to their customers. As customer demands for technology intensify, Digicloud is increasing its investment in supporting its partners to achieve sustainable growth. Digicloud's partner enablement helps organisations build skills around open, advanced technologies in order to go to market with outcome-based solutions.

Incentro launched their African office in 2017 and is one of Digicloud's top performing partners in East Africa. Incentro support companies to excel using unique Cloud Services, from modernising infrastructure, to development of cloud native applications. Examples include running SAP on Google Cloud, offering backup/disaster recovery and developing a fintech platform that gives farmers access to finance solutions. Through offering unique services, Incentro are able to grow local talent and make a lasting impact for them and the market. With a holistic view on collaboration that includes Chromebooks and Google Workspace, Incentro enables their customers to work productively, wherever they are. Incentro are the only Google Cloud Work Transformation specialists in Africa, making Incentro a go-to Partner for Google Cloud Platform and Google Workspace in Africa.

The partnership between Incentro and Digicloud intensified when Incentro and Digicloud successfully assisted the Central Bank of West Africa to move 1,300 employees across eight countries from office-based working to secure online collaboration - without any service disruption.

> **"During a crisis like this, you need to be able to deliver. Digicloud stepped up to the challenge and did it. Working together as one, for a common goal. This is more than a collaboration, but a true partnership that is built to last. In the beginning, I was wary about working with a Distributor. But Digicloud has proven their value and helped us achieve more than we could ever imagine achieving on our own. This project is a great example of this .**
> – Dennis de Weerd: Sales Director, Incentro Africa

The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic set in motion one of the most abrupt business disruptions in decades. Organisations were forced to rapidly transition their staff to a remote workplace in order to maintain brand confidence and both staff and customer continuity. This was the case for the Central Bank of West Africa.

"During a crisis like this, you need to be able to deliver. Digicloud stepped up to the challenge and did it. Working together as one, for a common goal. This is more than a collaboration, but a true partnership that is built to last. In the beginning, I was wary about working with a Distributor. But Digicloud has proven their value and helped us achieve more than we could ever imagine achieving on our own. This project is a great example of this," says Dennis de Weerd: Sales Director, Incentro Africa.

Digicloud's ambition is to digitally enable a million people across the African continent. The work transformation Incentro achieved with the Central Bank of West Africa, in partnership with Digicloud, is one such example.

"The unstable business environment in which many businesses have found themselves during 2020 has made digital transformation a necessity. To facilitate this, customers need partners with the skills and expertise to help support them through this change. Digicloud are proud to collaborate with Incentro in assisting customers with a Google inspired digital transformation in these challenging times," says Gregory MacLennan: CEO, Digicloud Africa.

With the support of Digicloud, Incentro Africa has become Google Work Transformation specialists and together Digicloud and Incentro are successfully addressing the work transformation needs of organisations across the continent.

incentro

DIGICLOUD AFRICA

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82 | The Luxe Factor

The high-end luxury market has no doubt taken a back seat during the pandemic, but fine aesthetics can travel across time, space and boundaries. Here are a few ways to revisit opulence and luxury over the holiday season in the comfort of your home.

Compiled by: Bontlefeela Mogoye
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BANKING ON THE IMPOSSIBLE: TAKING AN AFRICAN CENTRAL BANK ONLINE IN SEVEN DAYS

Taking a multinational bank digital in seven days sounds unthinkable, but in March 2020, the Central Bank of West African States (CBWAS) did just that. With lockdowns imminent, the bank moved 1,300 employees across eight countries from office-based working to secure online collaboration in one week without a glitch.

THE LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE

Central banks are the backbone of every nation's banking system, relied on to keep the money flowing. So when Covid-19 lockdowns loomed, CBWAS knew it had to act fast to maintain continuity for staff and customers.

Robust business continuity plans ensured core operations would continue, but the bank's office-based multi-national team relied on desktop-based tools and in-person meetings. How could they continue to work together securely and productively when stuck at home in only seven days' time?

A BOLD PLAN

Cue a bold plan from the CIO, Tiéguélé Coulibaly, to transition the bank's employee tools to the cloud in a week.

CBWAS selected Incentro, the work transformation enterprise specialist in Africa, and Digicloud Africa, to migrate the business to Google Workspace Enterprise before lockdown hit. As well as addressing common remote working challenges such as maintaining productivity and secure access to email, video conferencing, and documents, CBWAS saw a wider opportunity to encourage a culture of collaboration and innovation. Within IT, more efficient tools could accelerate product development, improve uptime and reduce costs.

REMARKABLE SUCCESS

When the bank's first member state went into lockdown, the migration to Google Workspace for all 1,300 employees was complete and achieved without any service interruption. A week after go-live, 99% of CBWAS staff had adopted Gmail. As lockdowns have eased, use of the core Google Workspace services has stayed strong.

Beyond business continuity, the hoped-for culture shift is well underway. Employees connect more regularly through Google Chat and Google Meet, and collaborate across countries with Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides. Attitudes are shifting, with teams more engaged with their work and showing greater willingness to share ideas remotely.

"It's amazing that something as simple-sounding as remote email and document sharing can have such a powerful impact. Enabling staff to work anywhere has become THE issue for businesses this year. CBWAS has shown how far beyond coping with the pandemic its value can extend," says Dennis de Weerd, CEO Incentro Africa.

IT TRANSFORMED

Within IT, Google's Apps Script tool has accelerated and automated workflows for developers, making it faster and easier to build add-ons and custom functions for Google Workspace products. Centralised dashboards and reporting ensure robust governance and control, while efficiencies have driven down costs, from a 40% drop in total cost per-user to a 60% reduction in monthly hardware spend.

"We've saved 40% on total per-user cost, reduced environment maintenance hours, received 60% fewer email related tickets, complied with data protection regulations, and have had no downtime for 6 months," says Tiéguélé Coulibaly, CIO, Central Bank of West African States.

Eliminating servers also reduced system maintenance and support effort, freeing up IT staff for projects that drive the bank forward. In fact, winning back time for more valuable activities is proving a major benefit of the transformation, both for employees across the bank and customers.

IMPOSSIBLE: THE NEW POSSIBLE

With the bank now exploring services such as Google Classroom, Google Cloud Platform and Big Query to build on Google Workspace's success, the project has clearly demonstrated the power of the possible.

"CBWAS did something previously unthinkable and in doing so, accomplished a digital transformation in a previously unimagined timeframe. They set the gold standard for business leadership in a time of adversity and change," says Gregory Maclennan, CEO, Digicloud Africa.

By being bold in the face of adversity, the bank showed customers and staff what a culture of innovation can achieve. They demonstrated the amplifying power of people working together towards a common goal, however impossible the goal may seem.

BCEAO
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DECEMBER 2020 | JANUARY 2021 • VOLUME 10 NUMBER 7

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ACBM DISRUPTS THE INVESTMENT BANKING MARKET

Patrick Eriksen, Marketing Manager, Dotmodus, in conjunction with Google Cloud and Digicloud Africa

ACBM might be a name you haven't heard of yet, but this new, ambitious investment bank is leading a revolution. Describing itself as 'the world's first regulated, digitally-native investment bank', its rapidly-growing business customer base enjoys the freedom of managing their finances from their mobile phones. While we expect this convenience in consumer banking, it's far from the norm in the complex world of investment banking.

Customisation is what makes ACBM unique. Its services are built like an app – customers manage their multiple accounts from an easy-to-use dashboard on their mobiles. They even get to choose the information the dashboards display, managing their cashflows, payments and investments from the same place. Customers can make real-time international transfers. Some can open a new account in a matter of hours. And importantly, customers have the reassurance that ACBM's services meet the compliance and regulatory requirements of today's cross border trade.

"We set out to reinvent investment banking, to make it simple. We want to put businesses and investors back in control of their banking," explains Simon Tobelem, ACBM CEO, co-founder and veteran of the corporate finance industry.

ACBM's disruptive approach is winning over businesses, multi-entity corporations, investors and high-net worth individuals across the world. Last year, the company established its headquarters in Mauritius, illustrating the importance of customers managing investments into and out of Africa.

CLOUD-FIRST STRATEGY IS A GAME-CHANGER

ACBM's game-changing approach has been made possible because it has built its business from the ground up on the cloud. Its unique banking platform, developed in-house, runs on Google Cloud Platform. This cloud-first strategy affords unparalleled agility.

Conversely, traditional financial institutions are weighed down with overhauling their legacy systems as they slowly adopt digital banking. "Migrating customers from their existing infrastructure is difficult, slow and very risky," says Tobelem.

INNOVATION DRIVES CUSTOMER-CENTRICITY

For ACBM, agility and innovation go hand in hand. Take ACBM's unique onboarding process for new customers. For a traditional bank, this can take months as it manually gathers forms, validates information and runs multiple risk profile checks. The result is frustrated, impatient customers. In contrast, ACBM developed its own onboarding app and integrated it with Google Workspace. The result is a much faster process where the customer feels in control and their first interaction with the bank is a positive and seamless experience.

Innovative service features like fast onboarding and a customisable dashboard require regular updating at the backend. ACBM's software development team uses Google Kubernetes Engine as the underlying infrastructure to enable this. Developers can build and deploy apps at speed, and the apps can handle any peaks in customer usage.

"We've designed the platform in a way that everything is sized to be limitless and universal, while new services and features can be easily scaled, changed and connected. Our IT is blockchain, AI and future ready. We don't have older technology to maintain. It's our IT architecture approach that makes us endlessly customisable," Tobelem elaborates.

Gregory MacLennan, CEO of Digicloud Africa, Google's Enablement Partner in Africa, comments: "ACBM has set the bar high in digital banking in Africa and it's been a privilege to be part of ACBM's unique approach. We're very excited to see what ACBM will do next!"

SECURITY IS PARAMOUNT

Of course, with IT at the heart of everything it does, data protection, privacy and compliance are top priorities. "Security is paramount," says Tobelem. "Protecting each customer's information is no less important than protecting their money." ACBM works with Google partner DotModus to navigate the complex regulatory requirements. Together they ensure ACBM's cloud platforms, apps and processes are secure, robust and resilient.

Tobelem says the corporate banks are trying to catch-up, but he's confident ACBM will keep outpacing them. He concludes with his vision for the company: "In the same way Google has become the backbone of the Internet, we want the ACBM platform to become the backbone of digital finance."

Google Cloud

DIGICLOUD AFRICA

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We Will Never Return

THERE HAS BEEN RENEWED FOCUS ON MENTAL wellbeing this year. When entire systems and economies crumble under the weight of the Covid carnage, you reach out for every smidgen of hope that things will turn around. When the external environment isn't really helping, you seek out the inner.

I recall an interview with Dr Deepak Chopra, the new age guru and alternative medicine advocate, in Johannesburg in 2015. He was seated on a jacquard wingback sofa at the end of a long, empty ballroom in the art deco-inspired Michelangelo hotel in Sandton.

"When is emotional and financial wellbeing truly achieved?" I asked him, seated on the lone chair next to him. He looked at me questioningly, as though I had thrown him a curveball.

"Ten percent of your daily happiness experience comes from your bank account," he smiled in answer. "And then 50% comes from your attitude to life and the remaining comes from the daily choices you make... People in Cuba are more happy than people in the United States, because when people focus on relationships, they are much happier."

But are they really? I pressed on. "No," he said as an afterthought, shaking his head. "I unfortunately see less and less of that. Even on their dying day, people would still say 'I wish I had worked one extra day and made more money'."

But of course, 2020 has thrown us all. The fear and anxiety that this year presented to a world blindsided by Covid-19 will take a while to dissipate. But while there was national reflection, it also spurred a collective renaissance, with countries and companies working together to find innovative ways – and moonshot cures – to combat a common enemy. Like a new smart device that renders everything else that came before it obsolete, 2020 has made the halcyon days of unlimited physical freedom and social bonding redundant. There can never be a return.

Perhaps never before has human tragedy been described as a daily statistic by every country on earth. Over a million people, who had woken to a brand new decade at the start of the year, hadn't expected that they would succumb to an unknown, vindictive virus on the prowl with no cure yet. In the cosmic scheme of things, more light is being shed on humanity, compassion, and the need for a healthy growth mindset.

Thus, it is important for you to also find some inspiration on these pages, featuring content that is authentic to *Forbes* and stories of intrepid entrepreneurs who have been celebrated for more than a century of the brand. The pandemic dealt a blow to commerce, money and markets but also created a pivotal year for business, with most companies pivoting and changing gear. After all, progress is a byword for business.

While industries are still experiencing shocks in the aftermath of the giant wrecking ball that was Covid-19, there is hope with some green shoots of recovery. From behind our masks and plexiglass screens and barriers – all we have in our defence against the virus is our behavior – we must look at the positives: the year also made heroes of ordinary men and women on the frontlines.

We also witnessed an important pandemic-era election. In his opening night speech, Joe Biden said: "This is the time to heal... We stand again at an inflection point."

With the political will to back us, may the denouement of 2020 lead to a year where science guides us.

2021, the world is placing all its hopes on you!



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Photo by Motlabana Monnakgotla

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‘THINK BIG, STRATEGIZE AND THEN GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY FOR RESULTS’

BY RAKESH WAHI, FOUNDER AND PUBLISHER, FORBES AFRICA

NOT FOR SALE

This year has passed by in a flash; the year can be characterized by its cricketing synonym 20/20. It will unfortunately remain a year etched in history, like 1918, for all the wrong reasons; when there has been abject realization that we only have the illusion of being in control of what is happening around us. The reality is so far removed. Just when we thought that we had conquered the world and had answers to all problems, we discovered that even the pantomaths amongst us have a long way to go before we can get into a comfort zone of being enlightened; even after which, I believe, we will remain the proverbial ostrich with its head buried in the sand. Personally, for me, the last eight months have been an oxymoron, personifying a strange combination of anxiety and bliss – “anxi-bliss”. The outcome has been great; on the one hand, I have been fighting fires to keep our operations afloat while on the other, I have been trying to rediscover my purpose. Adversity makes you philosophical and I cannot but reflect on the words of an all-time great author, Khalil Gibran: “Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens.”

On introspection, I truly believe that over the last two decades, similar to many others, I had almost become robotic. Too much to do with too little time. If success was to be measured by a single dimension of air miles, many would consider that I was a “made man”. As profound as it sounds, through the trials of 2020, business lessons aside, my three visits to my ophthalmologist were symbolic of getting clarity of vision.

Covid-19, in my view, has been a global visit to our respective ophthalmologists; our vision had become blurred and some corrective procedures have been performed. We all know the why, the what and the how of our circumstances, all that’s left is the *will* to fix things. There is really no brain surgery required. Simply put, it’s all in the implementation of measurable actions with honesty, humility, integrity and honor. Most people I have interacted with unanimously agree that our world is going to change in many ways; consequently, we are likely to adapt to these changes more rapidly than anticipated.



Photo by Motlabana Monnakgotla

It's our conduct that will define the change that we wish to see.

Our travel habits will change and I would be remiss not to share my maiden experience in October. We now live in a world of bubble travel zones between countries and airports. Essentially, it's direct flights between two airports where everything being transported, human or inanimate, is ceremoniously sanitized. I had to get three PCR tests in 12 days; before my departure from Dubai, before my departure from Delhi and on arrival at Dubai airport. The PCR test is a novel experience and to put minds at ease, the nasal intrusion is a mild discomfort. The airport processes are similar in different countries (formalities and medical documents) but the experience in the terminal building was surreal. It was like being in the operation theater of a hospital; everyone was treading carefully.

Dubai, however, does stand out even in a crisis as the customer service was exceptional; the staff and systems of Emirates Airline were synchronized to perfection. The flight was short, pleasant and uneventful; masks have become an equalizer as everyone's eyes looked enchanting and affections were evenly distributed. There was some humor when I looked at myself in the mirror with mask and face-shield; it did look like a themed fancy dress party. At the end of the trip, my subconscious did tell me that the days of 'get up and fly' are over; at least for me.

I can't end the year without talking about one of my passions – cricket, particularly the recently-concluded Indian Premier League (IPL 2020) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The tournament was delayed owing to the crisis and when the World Cup was postponed in Australia, the IPL was reinstated. Once again, the UAE, with immaculate timing, prepared its stadiums and made an offer to the Board of Control for Cricket in India that they could not refuse. Talk about bringing opportunity into adversity; how does one country repeatedly get it right? There is a simple answer; think big, strategize and then get your hands dirty to get results. The event in the UAE, although held in empty stadiums, has brought the needed hype into the cricket-loving community. Two billion people from around the world have been busy every evening for the last 40 days. The economic spin-offs aside, the UAE was on everyone's mind for the last two months. The cherry on top was the announcement in November that because of the pandemic in India, IPL 2021 may come back to the UAE.

The UAE further championed their cause by changing legislation relating to expatriates. One of the impediments seen by the government has been the sense of discomfort with a few laws relating to expatriates. In November 2020, in one stroke, the policy-makers changed legislation relaxing Islamic laws for personal freedom thereby making the UAE even more attractive for people from around the world to invest in. Furthermore, the country made it easy for expatriates to live in the UAE even if they were working remotely in any other part of the world. A pragmatic view towards legislation needs to be made by all progressive nations as laws prevalent decades ago are no longer relevant today.

Despite the somber mood around health and safety and a contracted global economy, everyone is looking forward with hope towards 2021 and beyond. I was recently invited to a podcast by Andrew Skipper of Hogan Lovells and amongst the many questions, he asked me about future opportunities.

This is a question that is on everyone's mind – is my business model relevant for the future and will my business thrive in a rapidly changing technological environment or how can I disrupt everything that seems archaic? The challenges caused by the pandemic are clear; we will prevail and get past this difficult period. There are so many lessons from this black swan event. I will only discuss two.

> **Development through over-regulation, protectionism and subsidies is not a sustainable model for growth and will increase debt that cannot be serviced. This is one of the biggest stumbling blocks in sub-Saharan Africa today.**

The first is tapping human capital more effectively. The best demographic to learn from is the generation aged between 20 and 40 today. They are the trend-setters, the true disrupters of businesses and by virtue of being on the right side of the creativity curve, their opinions must be made integral to policy frameworks; the gap between legislation and implementation has to be narrowed and it can only be done if the right terms of reference are integrated into the foundation blocks.

The second aspect that we have to consider is the alignment of economic blocs. The prosperity of people is the responsibility of local leaders; municipal, state and then national. No external party has an interest to provide solutions unless it is financially mandated to do so.

Regional blocs in Africa, including the African Union, have a place but will always be dominated by the strong with vested interests. Local governments must recognize that they do not have the capacity to provide all the solutions and the only way prosperity will come is through well-constructed policies for foreign investments and a well-orchestrated private sector. Development through over-regulation, protectionism and subsidies is not a sustainable model for growth and will increase debt that cannot be serviced. This is one of the biggest stumbling blocks in sub-Saharan Africa today.

We spend a lot of time talking about what is wrong and the problems that surround us. In the words of the former United States president Barack Obama: "The future rewards those who press on. I don't have time to feel sorry for myself. I don't have time to complain. I am going to press on."

That should be the New Year resolution for each one of us; work hard, make ethical choices and be part of the change that you want to see. The people of the United States have just proven it. Every individual has a voice and the power to institute change for a sunny 2021 and beyond. Happy New Year!



COMPILED BY CHANEL RETIEF

IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT

IF YOU CAN SPARKLE IN THE entertainment world, chances are you can bring the same spirit to the boardroom as a CEO.

After 16 years in the music industry, Ntombezinhle Jiyane, popularly known as 'DJ Zinhle' and one of South Africa's most-renowned deejays, is proving that right.

She has acquired equity in the international sparkling wine beverage, Boulevard Nectar Rosè, and has taken over as CEO.

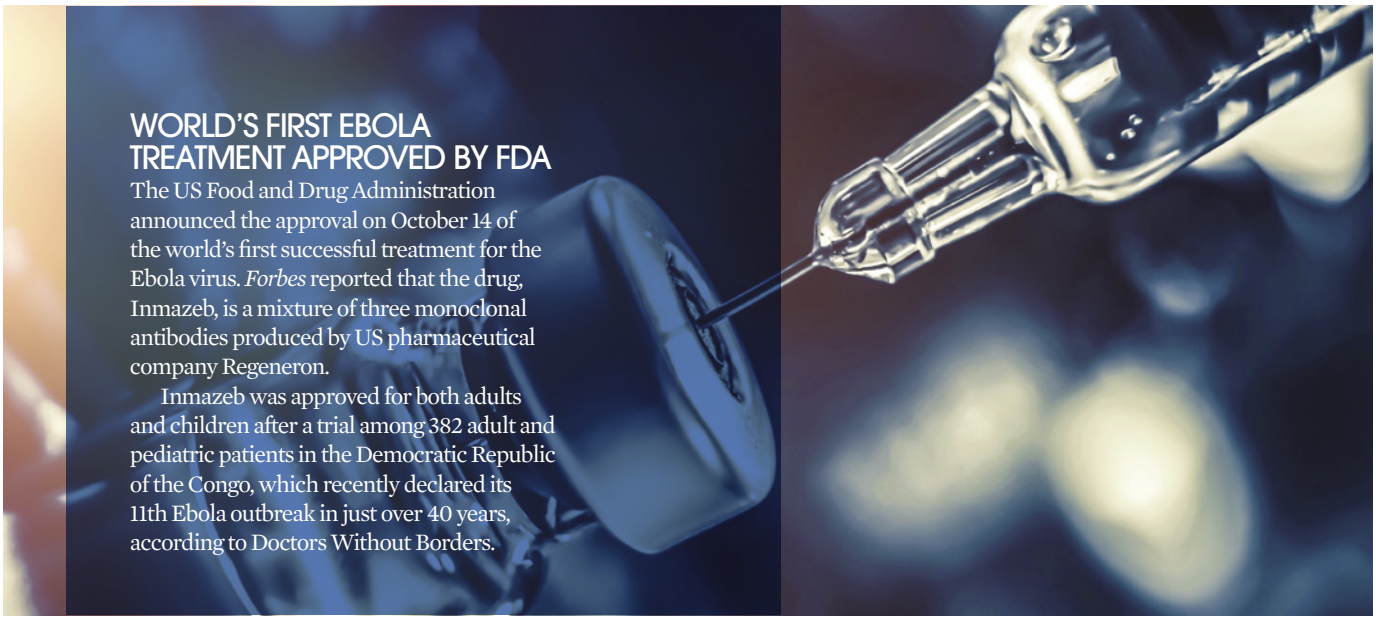
In a recent interview with FORBES AFRICA, the artist, famous for her *Umlilo* music, spoke about how excited she is to be working with a brand she shares synergy with: "I love to celebrate, whether it's at my house, whether it's at a gig. Celebrations have also been part of my life for the past 16 years as a DJ, and Boulevard fits perfectly into that. And I just thought I wanted to be part of people's celebrations even more."

With Covid-19, Zinhle has been forced to work from home like everyone else but says that this has not stopped her from putting in the long hours. Admitting that during the time of the lockdown, a great deal of adaption had to happen, Zinhle says she owes a lot of her success to her young and dynamic team who share the same values as her.

"Without my team, I don't think I would have made it this far even with a lockdown in it; my biggest mission was to make sure that no one leaves the team, no one gets fired, no one is dismissed. Because now my team is so perfect, and they're so dedicated."

For the full video interview, visit forbesafrica.com

Photo supplied



WORLD'S FIRST EBOLA TREATMENT APPROVED BY FDA

The US Food and Drug Administration announced the approval on October 14 of the world's first successful treatment for the Ebola virus. *Forbes* reported that the drug, Inmazeb, is a mixture of three monoclonal antibodies produced by US pharmaceutical company Regeneron.

Inmazeb was approved for both adults and children after a trial among 382 adult and pediatric patients in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which recently declared its 11th Ebola outbreak in just over 40 years, according to Doctors Without Borders.



Cannabis Sales On New High

According to global market research company Euromonitor International's new cannabis database, recreational cannabis sales will drive global legal market growth by 376% over the next five years, outpacing medical and CBD. "New consumption occasions and tailored value propositions will drive the industry into fast-moving consumer goods territory," Spiros Malandrakis, head of alcoholic drinks at Euromonitor International, said in a statement. "The modern cannabis consumer will not only continue to drink less alcohol and smoke less tobacco but also diversify from traditional recreational flower to other formats."

COVID-19 VACCINE GETS OVER 94%

American biotech company Moderna announced on November 16 that its Covid-19 vaccine is 94.5% effective in preventing the disease. The company announced that preliminary data from large-scale phase three trials confirmed this.

For more on the Covid-19 vaccine frontline, go to page 20.



Lesotho Overseas

Lesotho has a film with Oscar ambitions. The southern African country is vying to impress cineastes internationally. *This Is Not A Burial, It's A Resurrection*, "a haunting tribute to land, community and ancestry" starring the late South African actress Mary Twala, is the first film from Lesotho, made by a Mosotho filmmaker, to screen internationally. Directed by Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese, it also screened at this year's Sundance Film Festival, held in January.

"Our film will be Lesotho's first-ever Oscar entry. This is a historic moment!" producer Cait Pansegrouw of production company URUCU said. "It was made under such humble and challenging circumstances, but it continues to amaze us as it takes on a life of its own. I am exceedingly proud and so thankful for everything that it has achieved."

Photo supplied; Photos via Getty images

What Was Trending In Africa In 2020?

Hashtags from Africa that caught the globe's attention this year.

COMPILED BY CHANEL RETIEF

#ENDSars: Just as the country celebrated its diamond jubilee, police brutality protests started on October 7 in Nigeria calling for the disbanding of infamous police unit, , the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), which had long been accused of extortion, torture, and extra-judicial killings.

#CongoIsBleeding: Exploitation in the mines of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) received attention in October to highlight child slavery, deadly conflicts, and corruption spawned by the quest to feed mega-companies with minerals.

#ShutItAllDown: This was a wave of ongoing gender-based violence protests across Namibia aimed at stopping the spread of rape and the killing of women. According to CNN, the protests were in response to news of another attack, in turn, those protestors threatened to leave everything at a standstill for four days earlier in October.

#ZimbabweanLivesMatter: A predominantly online demonstration to address the human rights abuses in Zimbabwe in August. According to The Guardian, the hashtag was 'fashioned' after the Black Lives Matter global protests staged since the killing of George Floyd by a US police officer in May. Furthermore, the incarceration of journalist Hopewell Chin'ono and the Booker Prize long-listed author Tsitsi Dangarembga has angered more people across Africa.

#RapeNationalEmergancy: On September 11, Liberian President George Weah declared rape a national emergency in the country. According to Al Jazeera, Weah introduced measures in place to address the increase in violence against women. Measures include a special prosecutor for rape in the country, as well as the set-up of a national sex offender registry and the establishment of a "national security task force" on sexual and gender-based violence.

#ChildTrafficking: This has been highlighted as a severe problem on cocoa farms in Ghana and Ivory Coast. According to a US study, the prevalence of children doing hazardous work, including using sharp tools, has also gone up in the world's top two cocoa producers, reported Al Jazeera in October.

#Guinea: Guinea's president, Alpha Condé, has won a "controversial third term" with 59.49% of the vote, the National Independent Electoral Commission declared on October 24. According to the Guardian, his victory came at the same time as widespread protests "violently suppressed by security forces".

#AnglophoneCrisis: Since October 2016, Cameroon's Anglophone minority have been protesting due to sectoral grievances that morphed into political demands. On October 24 this year, the United Nations reported that eight children were killed and dozens wounded by a group of armed men at the Mother Francisca International Bilingual Academy Kumba in the southwest region of Cameroon. Although the southwest region is one of two Anglophone regions, it was not clear if the attack was linked to a continuing struggle between government forces and armed groups in the English-speaking west seeking to form a breakaway state.

#PrayForEthiopia: CNN reported on November 7 that a military conflict, which has raised fears of civil war, broke out due to Tigray's Peoples Liberation Front's (TPLF) unilateral decision to elect a regional administration against Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's wishes. "Our operation aims to end the impunity that has prevailed for far too long and hold accountable individuals and groups under the laws of the land," Abiy said on Twitter. According to the Herald Malaysia, this resulted in heavy casualties and thousands of civilians fleeing the region.

#StopGBV: During the lockdown, gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa has become a second pandemic for the country. According to the Commission of Gender Equality, South Africa is ranked amongst the highest in Africa for domestic violence. At the end of July, Police Minister Bheki Cele released crime stats showing that sexual crimes in the country increased by 1.7%, with 53,293 cases reported. This is 873 cases more than in 2019.

SOUTH AFRICA INVESTMENT CONFERENCE BAGS $7 BILLION IN COMMITMENTS

The third South Africa Investment Conference was held on November 17-18 in Johannesburg, bringing together powerhouses from the public and private sectors to discuss issues around the South African economy and drum up investment for the country.

In the past two years, R660 billion ($42.5 billion) has been raised by the conference and this year's investment drive raised R109.6 billion ($7 billion).

The panels held over two days addressed participants both digitally and in person.

A total of nine discussions took place and each delved into a pertinent issue related to rebuilding the economy. The Director-General of the BRICS' New Development Bank, Monale Ratsoma, announced that the bank would be investing $2 billion towards the development of South Africa's infrastructure.

Ratsoma was firm on the involvement of the government in ensuring regulatory compliance.

Kgosientso Ramokgopa, Chief Executive of Infrastructure South Africa, echoed the sentiments, further emphasizing the need for the implementation of government strategy and action over policy development and discussions around this. Ramokgopa also highlighted the need for government to take actionable steps towards implementation instead of only theorizing the possibilities through the use of policy and regulations.

"We [the government] are very big on talk and policy articulation and there is very little attention on application and delivery," said Ramokgopa. He said a step towards this would be collaboration with the private sector and reformation of structural procedures.

The message from day one was intertwined into the conversations on day two as Ramaphosa also outlined the need for "walking the walk over talking the talk". The need for the localization of production was highlighted.

Ramaphosa also outlined the recovery plan which was going to deal with the reformation of the economic structure and stream-lining of industrial processes. Investors into the economy such as Amazon web services and Naspers outlined what their investments have provided to South Africa so far.

"In responding to the coronavirus emergency, South Africa has demonstrated its capacity for innovation, collaboration and versatility," said Ramaphosa in his opening speech on the second day.

As the conference drew to a close, the evidence of its effectiveness or shortcomings will only be revealed in the coming months as the country continues to tackle the challenges presented by Covid-19.

– Simone Sribrath

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ARE YOU ALL AT SEA?

WHAT IS YOUR PLAN B?

Does *your* plan B
let you decide where you live?

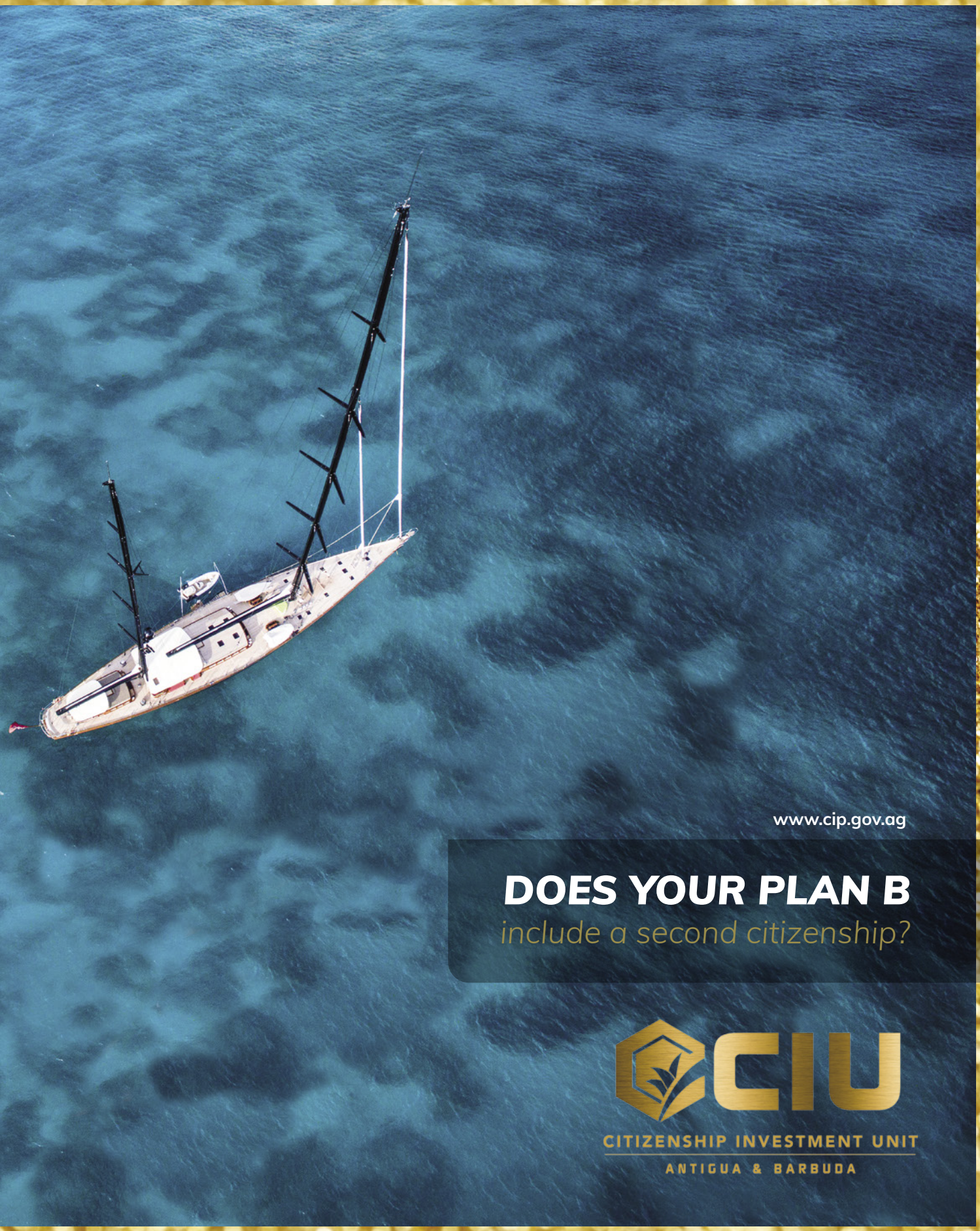
Does *your* plan B
allow you to easily access
healthcare in another country?

Does *your* plan B
mean that you can travel
to a business meeting on
the other side of the world
at a moment's notice?

Does *your* plan B
protect your children's
inheritance?

Does *your* plan B
give you wealth
management options?

Does *your* plan B
allow you to relocate
your family in the event
of a national disaster?



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DOES YOUR PLAN B
include a second citizenship?

CIU

CITIZENSHIP INVESTMENT UNIT

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

If there's one thing that 2020 has shown you, it's that life can be unpredictable. Never has it been more important to have a robust Plan B in place for the unexpected – no matter what life throws at you.

If your Plan B doesn't already include a second citizenship, perhaps now is the time to think about it to protect those you care about the most.

Investing in the Antigua & Barbuda Citizenship by Investment Programme means that whatever happens in life, you and your family can feel secure with the knowledge that you have options for where to live and where to go. With flexibility for your wealth management needs, no tax on your worldwide income nor inheritance tax, you can rest assured that your family's best interest is served both now and in the future.

Furthermore, not only is Antigua & Barbuda amongst the fastest-growing economies in the Caribbean region and an international financial centre whose legal system is based on British Common Law, but there are countless investment and business opportunities available in a variety of sectors.

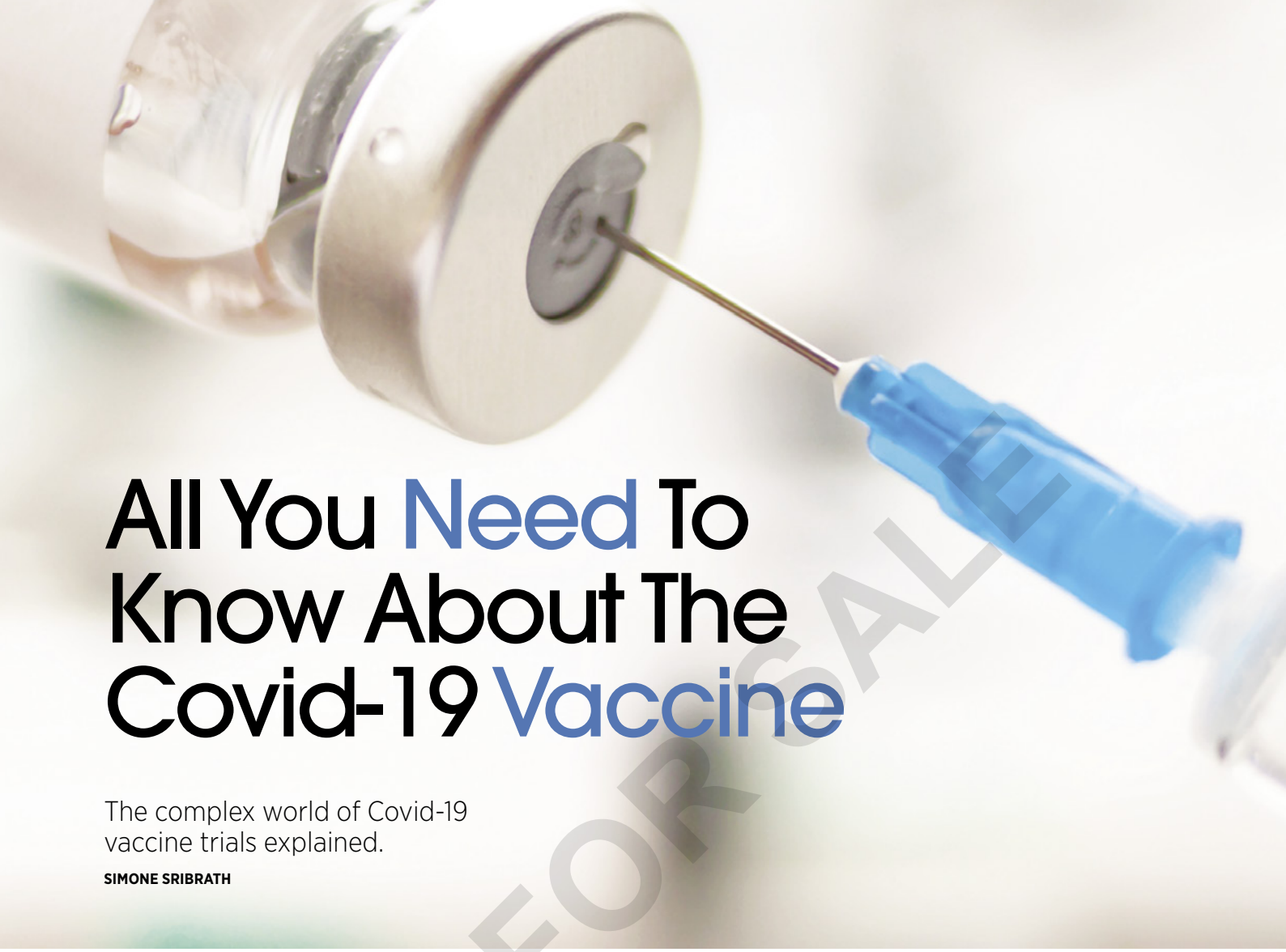
Visa-free access to over 150 countries across the globe allows you to jump on a plane to that business meeting or conference at a moment's notice. The world is indeed your oyster.

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All You Need To Know About The Covid-19 Vaccine

The complex world of Covid-19 vaccine trials explained.

SIMONE SRIBRATH

NOT FOR SALE

SOMEWHERE IN THE DEEP UNEXPLORED depths of Madagascar, an unknown herb is probably on its way to becoming a global panacea for the pandemic.

This is Africa, a continent ripe with possibilities, where you cannot rule out that a cure for Covid-19 could perhaps come from nature itself. Just like Madagascar, currently touting Artemisia Afra (*umhlonyane* in Nguni languages and previously used as an ingredient for treating malaria) as a potential cure for Covid-19, bigger economies like South Africa are also looking to the botanical world for answers. Its national Department of Basic Education has reassigned R15 million ($960,982) of its budget on Covid-19 interventions such as Artemisia. Nigeria has also made a move towards a more homeopathic approach, as a ministerial committee has been put in place to further examine the potential natural compounds hold in combating the Covid-19 pandemic.

But the focus of this story is exploring humanity's race to uncover a universal vaccine – or any cure – that can assuage a health crisis confronting the entire world.

Currently, there are over 60 possible vaccines the world over being put through the paces. Of these, only nine are in the third phase of trials. The road to finding a Covid-19 vaccine since the start of the pandemic this year has been long and arduous. For the lay person, desperate to see an effective vaccine come online soon, the deluge of news on vaccine trials can seem complex. This article will discern the facts around them.

In comparison to its European and American counterparts, Africa has seen a relatively lower rate of virus spread and a lower death rate. As of November 11, Africa accounted for 3.7% of the world's total number of cases; and southern Africa the worst hit with over 800,000 cases.

Scientists are yet to definitively map out the effects of the Covid-19 virus and its ability to recur within individuals who have had it before. Fear of public spaces and physical interactions have become the norm. Face masks and

A World Economic Forum/Ipsos global survey found the number of people willing to get a Covid-19 vaccine has dropped to 73%.

sanitizing products have become staples in every handbag and car cubbyhole.

Put simply, a clinical trial is a series of phases within an experiment being conducted to test a new drug, type of therapy or new medical device. It also looks at the efficacy of pre-existing medical interventions in the treatment of numerous illnesses and different types of patients.

Clinical trials can be performed on both healthy and ill participants. There are a number of protocols and regulations that accompany a clinical trial to ensure that the wellbeing of the participant is maintained as far as possible. It ensures that the benefits of the medical intervention being tested outweigh the risks and each phase of a trial plays a part in testing this.

Clinical trials usually happen in four phases (*see box*). Before these phases occur, a preclinical test is done. Each phase needs to produce a favorable result in order for the next phase to be conducted. In order for a medical intervention to get to the stage of manufacturing and distribution, all four phases need to have occurred successfully. The success of each phase is measured by the number of medically adverse events that have occurred as a result of the medical intervention being tested. These adverse events include mild to serious medical side-effects that have occurred to the participants of the trial.

Dr Sinead Delany-Moretlwe, Director of Research at the Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute in Johannesburg, South Africa (*see interview in box on next page*) explains how innovations made with expediting the clinical trials for the Covid-19 vaccine could reshape how clinical trials are done across the board. She has also been the lead on HPTN 084, an injectable form of an antiretroviral (ARV) used to prevent HIV in women in sub-Saharan Africa.

The frantic search for a Covid-19 vaccine is being closely watched by every country on earth. At the time of going to press mid-November, there were currently 51 trials between Phases I and III of the clinical trials (*see boxes on following pages for more info*). When they will be available to all is a question on everyone's mind.

South Africa's Health Minister, talking to FORBES AFRICA about vaccine manufacturers, says: "Collaboration across global institutions has led to the transfer of technology and therefore new developments and new discoveries in combating the pandemic."

In an interview with Aspen Pharmacare CEO and founder, Stephen Saad, he highlights to FORBES AFRICA the need for efficient manufacturing and distribution channels for the vaccine, once it becomes available. Aspen recently partnered with Johnson & Johnson for their vaccine Ad26.COV2-S (now known as JNJ-78436735). This partnership will see the manufacturing and distribution capacity of Johnson & Johnson increase significantly.

WHAT GOES INTO A CLINICAL TRIAL?

Preclinical Phase
This phase within a study is most intensive and can often require the most amount of time and extensive research into possible cellular reactions between the intervention being investigated and the body's immune response. This phase is often tested thoroughly with the use of animal test subjects before proceeding to Phase I.

Phase I
This initial phase is conducted on a relatively small number of participants (six-10). It allows scientists to closely study and examine any effects or interactions that the intervention being investigated has in human participants. This phase is used to determine the safety and tolerability elements that an intervention may have in treating human participants. Participants are closely watched for the possible occurrence and severity of any side-effects that may occur.

Phase II
The size of the participant pool could vary greatly here as the size is dependent on the type of illness being investigated (typically between 20-300 participants). In this phase, the dosage is often experimented with. This is done to successfully determine the dosage required for the intervention to be most effective and safe to administer. Different dosages of the intervention could produce different results. As such, multiple simulations of Phase II may occur for a single intervention, being tested within numerous populations of interest.

Phase III
As with Phase II, the sample increases substantially (300-3,000 participants). These large numbers are used to confirm the level of safety and efficacy of the medical intervention. This phase also allows for a significant comparison between the drug being tested and other similar interventions on the market. It can also be used to test the efficacy of the intervention when used as part of a treatment plan and it tests the interactions it has with other medical interventions within the treatment plan. Finally, this phase allows for the prescribed dosage to be finalized.

Phase IV
The last and final phase occurs after regulatory approval has been granted. This phase looks at the long-term administration of the medical intervention and possible side-effects that could occur as a result of prolonged use of the intervention. This phase tests the overall efficacy and safety of the intervention within larger groups and sub-groups within a population. By this phase, the occurrence of any serious medical events has been resolved and the intervention becomes available as a viable treatment option within the sub area of the medical market. Regulatory bodies keep a close eye on the intervention as it continues to monitor the administration of the intervention to the general public. Doing this ensures that any medical intervention currently in the public domain or in the clinical trial phase is entirely safe for human use.



One of the theories I have relates to the intrinsic social systems that exist within the continent. The difference we have to more developed countries is that we have grassroots workers who go around and inform communities. This is the system we have used when dealing with other crises such as HIV, malaria and so on. The utilization of this system has proven itself to be consistently beneficial, especially given that universal health is not our strength.

– Dr Zweli Mkhize, South Africa's Minister of Health to FORBES AFRICA on Africa's relatively low rate of Covid-19 infections

Saad explains that Aspen uses just 40% of their current manufacturing capacity for their own products and the other 60% was available for use. "Covid-19 is prevalent everywhere. We were very committed to trying to find a partner that would use our capabilities to be able to provide a vaccine," says Saad.

At the heart of the partnership is the transfer of technology as Johnson & Johnson share their protocols and blueprint for creating the vaccine

Q&A: 'ENDEMIC DISEASES LIKE HIV ARE STILL AN EMERGENCY'

Dr Sinead Delany-Moretlwe, Director of Research at the Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute in Johannesburg, South Africa:

Q. Currently, clinical trials can take years to reach Phase IV. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us how much quicker it can go. Do you think there are lessons that can be taken from this?
A: We have learned a lot during the Covid-19 pandemic about how we can potentially expedite processes and get products to the people that need them rapidly and I think it's important to remember that in our region, endemic diseases like HIV are still an emergency. While we don't want to cut corners and while we want to ensure that we have safe and effective products for people, something that Covid-19 vaccine trials may need to grapple with is no longer using placebo-control trials as it is harder to justify from an ethical perspective, especially as more vaccines begin to hit the market.

Q. What does this then mean from a design perspective for trials going forward?
A. Trial design is going to be very interesting to see going forward. In terms of just the processes, there have been discussions about how to diminish the transition time from Phase II to Phase III and these large gaps that affect when results are being received.

Q. What lessons are there for clinical trials running during a pandemic such as the current one?
A. Future trials are going to have to Covid-proof themselves. We learned during conducting our trial, sibling trials during a pandemic are challenging and we're going to have to think about how we do these studies so that we are managing staff and participant safety.



NOT FOR SALE

MTN Business

Partnerships

MTN Business expands partnership with Huawei Cloud



When Huawei Cloud announced the establishment of a new region in South Africa, the Chinese technology giant became the world's first cloud service provider to operate a local data centre to provide cloud services in Africa.

To accelerate the adoption of cloud in the country, MTN Business partnered with Huawei, to build the data centre for Huawei's Cloud infrastructure in Centurion, Gauteng.

According to Sudipto Moitra, General Manager: ICT at MTN Business, the partnership with Huawei in the cloud space is one that has been built with the interest of customers in mind. "Many people think of MTN as a telco only, but we have built on this legacy to form an unparalleled foundation of ICT services across Africa. The partnership with Huawei Cloud illustrates our commitment to providing an end-to-end solution for customers, and our capabilities of moving up the stack from just being a connectivity provider," he says.

"Originally partnering to provide Huawei Cloud with easy access to local data centres, we have expanded this collaboration to various other affiliated projects, leveraging MTN's core assets of network coverage and the roll out of our 5G infrastructure. We know how to build world-class data centres, and operate them, having built around 30 regional data centers, some of them for our own switching houses, and we have extended this knowledge and expertise to help customers move their workloads from on-prem to public cloud."

The success of the partnership has prompted both companies to look at further investments to provide a full digital platform to customers. These investments range from foundational technologies such as SD-WAN, to a full Internet of Things (IoT) ecosystem.

"Huawei Cloud has differentiated itself in the market by ensuring that clients have access to an end-to-end solution, and we are proud to have been able to facilitate that in the enterprise space to be relevant to all the market segments we serve," Moitra says.

He adds that the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation of many companies across the continent, and in South Africa in particular. As a result, MTN Business and Huawei Cloud have seen increasing interest from local companies.

"As remote work and e-commerce become the norm, more companies are moving their workloads into the cloud. Many companies are using a multi-cloud strategy, with Huawei Cloud featuring prominently. In fact, there are a number of workloads and applications that are the right fit on the Huawei Cloud, and African businesses are starting to appreciate the benefits of this," he explains.

According to Moitra, the local availability of Huawei Cloud, bundled with MTN's connectivity, will assist multinational companies operating in Africa to enjoy uninterrupted operations – whether they are just initiating their African presence, or have been operating on the continent for some time. In addition, MTN and Huawei Cloud have the expertise and technologies to enable unique solutions for them. For example, mining operations can benefit from the Operational Technologies and AI capabilities that are being used in the Huawei Cloud in other areas of the world, to great effect.

"MTN Business and Huawei Cloud are proud to be able to offer a full end-to-end solution to help customers reach their strategic objectives and digital transformation goals. We are working together to improve availability across South Africa and the rest of Africa, and we are looking forward to expanding our cloud footprint, as well as continuing to deepen the partnership," he concludes.

For more information on how MTN can co-create solutions for your organisation, send an email to **mtnbusiness.marketing@mtn.com**

mtnbusiness.co.za

HUAWEI

MTN



So much depends on the trials and the success of these trials.
– Stephen Saad

so they are able to manufacture it once it has passed Phase III trials.

"We are very pleased because Johnson & Johnson have made big commitments to distribute their vaccine universally, so they've made commitments through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and to their own public statements about offering up 500 million doses to the developing world," says Saad.

The manufacturing site in Port Elizabeth in South Africa's Eastern Cape province will be utilized in this partnership where as many as 300 million doses can be produced and this is expected to begin the second quarter of next year should the Ad26.COV2-S prove successful.

"So much depends on the trials and the success of these trials," says Saad. Aspen, having been linked to the success of the steroid Dexamethasone, and now as a vaccine frontrunner, have proven their reputation as a pharmaceutical powerhouse.

With an investment of R3 billion ($194 million) into their "sterile site", Saad is confident. "There's not a lot of companies that can manufacture on this scale," he says.

Saad recognizes the urgency for a vaccine. "Our first and only priority right now is to get the product out to the world and our focus is on the job that we have to do very quickly over the next period."

Currently, the only African country involved in the trial phases of these vaccines has been South Africa across different sites. Progress is being made by Oxford University as they await final clearance



TYPES OF VACCINES EXPLORED

Different types of vaccines are being explored to find the most effective method of administration, and these are:

Genetic vaccines: Vaccines that deliver the genetics of the coronavirus into our bodies in a controlled dosage. This allows for these virus cells to interact with human cells thereby formulating an immune response to the virus.

Viral vector vaccines: This is the use of living virus cells that have been imbued with chemically weakened coronavirus genetic cells. These, once injected, elicit an immune response from human cells that have become infected by the virus.

Protein-based vaccines: Here, proteins are extracted from a virus and not their genetic material.

Inactivated vaccines: The creation of an immune response using a weakened version of the coronavirus cell in which the active, viral component has been destroyed through chemical processes.

Repurposed vaccines: These are pre-existing vaccines currently in use to combat other diseases that may also provide an immune response against the coronavirus.

NOT FOR SALE



Sowing The Seeds Of Possibility

In the 1990s, Zuneid Yousuf returned to his native Zambia. It was time to use the skills and knowledge built up through years of hard work in the textile industry and importing and distributing products from around the world.

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ZUNEID YOUSUF | CHAIRMAN OF AFRICAN GREEN RESOURCES (AGR)

Zuneid Yousuf is working to transform the agribusiness industry in Africa from within – here's how

Almost 30 years since Zuneid Yousuf returned to Zambia, he has become chairman of African Green Resources (AGR), a world-class agribusiness company transforming Southern Africa's agriculture sector. From textiles to African agricultural pioneer, Zuneid Yousuf has had quite the journey.



ZUNEID YOUSUF

"Local knowledge and resources are keys to maximise business growth and successes"

AFRICAN GREEN RESOURCES

afrigreenresources.com

Yousuf's business interests are varied, and have encompassed everything from fast moving consumer goods to the provision of soft drinks to the Zambian market and beyond. His entrepreneurial spirit is evident in each venture, placing the highest value on upholding integrity and a core belief that African businesses can outperform international rivals.

African Green Resources

Today, Yousuf is leading AGR, connecting farmers to suppliers and producers with access to markets, value addition and finance. This year the organisation launched an US$81 million financing programme and has extensive plans to invest US$150 million in Zambia for projects including a 50-megawatt solar farm and irrigation dam.

The scale of AGR's projects seem a long way from Yousuf's humble beginnings, yet his passion for African business development and the role that African businesses can play in delivering sustained economic growth has long been central to Yousuf's outlook. These issues have become even more central to Yousuf's vision as Zambia and the wider region is impacted by serious droughts, compounded by COVID-19, which has fuelled worrying forecasts for

Zambia's economy

Zambian farmers are therefore not only finding it increasingly harder to produce their crops, but they are also facing difficulties in selling and marketing their products. This is especially the case for the production of maize, of which 90% is carried out by small scale subsistence farmers. AGR's new partnership with U.S-based African Fertiliser and Agribusiness Partnership in June 2020 is therefore all the more important. Not only is this a realisation of Yousuf's central ambition, to help promote business growth and entrepreneurship, but it is actively creating jobs across Southern African during unprecedented and challenging times.

The Journey

Upon his return to Zambia, Yousuf didn't choose the easiest sector to start a new business. Tangy Drinks started as a backyard project for the family, yet rapidly grew following shrewd investments in bottling machinery and expanded into the third most-popular soft drinks company in Zambia. The lessons from Yousuf's time in the textile industry were highly influential: to deliver affordable prices at speed without compromising quality, efficiency and reliability.

Within a few remarkable years, Yousuf and his family went from selling and producing soft drinks, to creating and consolidating a vast network of import and export goods across the region.

By 2015, Yousuf had spotted an opportunity in the fertiliser market. At the time, Zambia and the entire Southern African region were dealing with serious food shortages due to the El Niño climate phenomenon. The sector was in desperate need of fertiliser to bolster agricultural production. Thanks to Yousuf's business in partnership with other regional enterprisers, Zambia eventually produced a surplus of food and became a key export partner to neighbouring countries.

The Next Chapter

Yousuf's determination to develop new approaches to tackle the challenges the world faces in producing food for an ever-growing population has led to extensive collaboration with academics and independent specialists around the world.

Zambia's current unemployment rate is estimated at 13.20%. Alongside his commitment to agribusiness, Yousuf is actively seeking to face this issue head on, supporting the Citizens' Entrepreneur Development Programme to promote entrepreneurship at every level of Zambian society. The programme hopes to create 1.2 million jobs over the next two years, creating jobs in the mining, agriculture and urban business sectors.

At the heart of Yousuf's extensive business career and achievements lies a simple yet important belief, that local knowledge and resources are keys to maximise business growth and successes. Yousuf is seeking to transform the agriculture and agribusiness sector from within, looking inwards rather than outwards for opportunity.

‘ALL OF THIS IS NEW TERRITORY AND REALLY IN A WAY, UNPREDICTABLE’

Professor Barry Schoub, a world-renowned virologist, details the Covid-19 vaccine process and the innovations being made in the field as well as the involvement of Africa in these trials.



Q. Given how each phase within a clinical trial has been expedited to find a Covid-19 vaccine, do you think it will have the same effectiveness or efficacy as other vaccines used to combat infectious diseases similar in nature?
A. I think up to the Pfizer release, scientists, virologists, vaccinologists thought it would be a vaccine with a 60% efficacy. So these results are in the same ballpark as the influenza vaccine because it’s got a similar kind of disease process. It is only an interim analysis of course, but it certainly has very good connotations attached to it. It is also a possibility that the corona vaccines will have a higher protection rate than the influenza vaccine for example. However, it will not have the same efficacy rate as more successful vaccines such as the measles vaccine which has an efficacy of about 95% and therefore we do need to have some reservation.

Q. There are a number of vaccine types currently in trials. Pfizer and BioNTech are developing a genetic vaccine while Johnson & Johnson are trialing a viral vector vaccine model they have used for finding an Ebola vaccine previously. Do you think the type of vaccine influences the efficacy rate?
A. These vaccines are all new, this has never been done on humans, so there is no definitive way to say. We’ve never had an RNA or DNA vaccine going into human beings and we’ve never had a virus vector going into human beings. Previous use of a viral vector for HIV vaccine trials didn’t go well because of pre-existing immunity to the adenovirus being used as the vessel. All of this is new territory and really in a way, unpredictable.

Q. What do you think of the innovations then made with these vaccines?
A. It’s very exciting and just the speed with which these vaccines have come out as well. This disease has only been with us from the beginning of the year, so it’s amazing as vaccines usually take years to develop.

Q. These trials are also being tested throughout the world, and given that South Africa is the only site in Africa with any of these trials happening, do you think there should be more testing sites in Africa?
A. I don’t think all of Africa needs involvement in trials per se... It would just be where there is prevalence of disease, for example, endemic diseases such as HIV and TB in southern Africa and more tropical diseases so these are scenarios that do need to be looked at.

Q. Do you think these trials have accounted for all necessary factors that could play a role in how successful the vaccines could be?
A. In European and American trials, there are still key populations missing in the evaluation of these vaccinations like the elderly or people with co-morbidities, so all of these factors do need to be evaluated. All the vaccines currently in Phase III lack the optimal populations, so they all have a set age parameter and these vaccines still need testing in high-risk populations.

Q. Do you see any potential barriers that could decrease the uptake of the vaccine?
A. Well... there’s always suspicion, and polls here and abroad have shown hesitance and reluctance. First of all, things have been done at such fast speeds so there are concerns about safety and also the novelty of these vaccines and that they haven’t been used on humans before. So these factors can lead to suspicion.

Q. Do you think there any possible solutions to this?
A. They need to be reassured that these do undergo very rigorous safety testing and this will prove to be an educational exercise.

Q. What are your thoughts on the eventual accessibility of the vaccine within Africa?
A. In the beginning, we could possibly get a relatively small proportion of vaccines for the population, so the initial batches will have to go to priority groups. This includes frontline workers as an example, people in elderly homes and other high-risk populations.

Q. Do you think initiatives such as CEPI could also see Africa receiving the vaccine sooner than anticipated?
A. Initiatives such as CEPI and COVAX are pooled procurement mechanisms, so these aim to provide both middle and low income countries with their initial supply of the vaccine when it becomes available. So the vaccination process will need to happen in two steps; first step would be to protect vulnerable groups and then only later try to achieve herd immunity.

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to begin trials in Kenya and the Uganda Virus Research Institute is aiming to collaborate with the Imperial College London and begin trials in Uganda in December.

Historically, only 2% of all vaccine trials have occurred on the African continent, according to a report in *The Lancet*.

Despite being no stranger to viral outbreaks, Africa as a whole is often excluded from the vaccine process and as such there is a severe lack of understanding of the African context when trialing a potential vaccine or medical intervention.

There are several factors that could possibly hinder the efficient and comprehensive administration of a Covid-19 vaccine when it eventually becomes available.

Accessibility to the vaccine is seen as a key issue, particularly within developing countries. While there are several initiatives such as the investments made by Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations as well as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, African countries are still amongst the last buyers of any possible vaccine that emerges.

There is surely light at the end of the tunnel but it may be a while before a cure will finally see the light of day.



$12 BILLION

In an African Union (AU) meeting in November to discuss Africa's strategy for financing Covid-19 vaccines, AU Chairperson and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa noted that about $12 billion was required, and this was expected to come from three sources: the COVAX Donor Initiative, The World Bank, direct donors, and the African Import Export Bank, which has committed to raise up to $5 billion.

VACCINES UNDER TRIAL

BNT162b2 (Pfizer and BioNTech)

This vaccine was one of two versions put through the paces. It emerged triumphant as it was found to produce a lower number of severe side-effects. The vaccine itself is administered over two separate doses, several weeks apart. Since the launch of Phase II/III trials in July, it has been tested on more than 30,000 participants across four continents, including Africa. As of September, trials are currently underway in South Africa.

As of mid-November, interim results announced by Pfizer and BioNTech have shown that the vaccine was effective by up to 90% in 94 participants in Phase III. These participants had never been infected with the coronavirus. Thereafter, it was announced that a final data analysis found the vaccine 95% effective. As a result of these promising outcomes, the FDA has provided Pfizer and BioNTech with fast-track designation. These companies have also requested an expansion in their protocol to allow for the enrolment of more participants. With these expeditions in place, Pfizer and BioNTech could possibly have a vaccine rolled out as early as December.

JNJ-78436735 / Ad26.COV2-S (Johnson & Johnson)

Using the same systems used to create an Ebola vaccine, Johnson & Johnson are working on a viral vector vaccine that has shown positive signs in terms of immunogenicity and its safety profile. With the vaccine itself being administered in a single dose, it stands out for its simplicity.

As of September, the trial is in Phase III. There was a momentary pause in the testing of this vaccine to accommodate a medical adverse event that had occurred in a participant. This has since been resolved, the necessary protocols updated and the trial has commenced with testing. As of October, Johnson & Johnson has entered a partnership with South African pharmaceutical giant, Aspen. This partnership will increase the manufacturing and distribution capacity once the vaccine has been approved for roll out. Currently, it is one of three vaccines currently being trialed in South Africa.

AZD1222 (University of Oxford, AstraZeneca, IQVIA, Serum Institute of India)

The amalgamation of these medical powerhouses has led to the creation of a unique vaccine using a chimpanzee adenoviral vector approach. This approach simply means that it is the use of a non-enveloped virus which does not interact with any pre-existing adenoviruses while still being able to effectively develop an immune response from human cells.

Results from this trial have shown that most participants display an immune response after one dosage and all participants display a response after two dosages. Phase III results indicate an immune response, however, due to a serious adverse event that occurred during trials, the study was paused temporarily. Approval is currently being sought amongst different countries including Australia and Britain.

NVX-CoV2373 (Novavax)

With financial backing from CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) towards manufacturing and distribution, Novavax has committed to the production of a billion doses of their vaccine by 2021. This seems extremely likely as positive results were announced from Phase I trials with participants developing an immune response at varying doses. Since then, Phase III trials have begun in the United Kingdom and have begun in the United States as of November. This vaccine has also been tested in South Africa and currently awaits Phase III approval.

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What Next For The NHI?

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There has been enough debate and deliberation around South Africa's proposed National Health Insurance Bill for unified health coverage. Covid-19 has turned the spotlight on it again, and there's more news expected in February 2021.

BY CHANEL RETIEF

"I FEEL GOOD," WERE THE LAST WORDS 33-YEAR-OLD Charlie Mpogeng remembers his brother, Herman Motlhabane, saying to him before his untimely passing on the morning of July 17.

Motlhabane died, his relatives not knowing it was because of Covid-19 as his test results were only made available two weeks after his passing.

He had complained of a flu before being hospitalized.

"It was during that time of mass hysteria when everyone was like 'if you have the flu, have it checked out'," Mpogeng remembers as he walks to his brother's grave at Westpark Cemetery in Emmarentia, west of Johannesburg. Even as he speaks, a tractor is digging up more graves around him, for other hapless victims who have succumbed to Covid-19.

By the end of July, 1,932 people had died of the pandemic in South Africa's Gauteng Province, Motlhabane one of them.

With a disruptive virus still on the prowl to claim more



unsuspecting lives, political establishments everywhere are sitting up and revisiting their healthcare systems – or the lack of it.

In South Africa, the focus has returned to the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill, proposed to improve and strengthen the health financing system and provide quality, affordable medical care to all.

"The pandemic also showed the need for the public and private healthcare sectors to work together," Dr Zweli Mkhize, the country's health minister, said at a press briefing in October. "This is one of the core principles of the NHI."

To further enable this, the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) and The National Institute For Communicable Diseases Of South Africa (NCID) have fallen under one umbrella, to ensure tests are adequately and accurately captured, but also to ensure labs can exchange skills, information and resources as and when the need arises.

"At the start of the pandemic, there was a critical shortage of test kits. At that time, the labs would count all the kits that were available in the country and then distribute them equitably amongst each other, regardless of whether the lab was private or public and it's important to point out that both public and private labs co-sponsored each other in ensuring equitable distribution," Popo Maja, the spokesperson for the national Department of Health in South Africa, tells FORBES AFRICA.

Healthcare workers were counted as "one workforce" during these dire times, working freely between public and private sectors and some moving to work at field hospitals. Due to the high demand for hospital beds for Covid-19 patients, the government agreed with private hospital groups about pricing and acceptance of state patients. According to Maja, such negotiations have previously taken years

> **"Universal health coverage is now a global aspiration.**



WHO QUALIFIES FOR NHI IN SOUTH AFRICA?

According to the Department of Health, all South Africans qualify for NHI. This includes permanent residents, prison inmates, and all children under 12 regardless of their parents' citizenship status. However, illegal immigrants and asylum seekers will only qualify for emergency services. Travelers into the country will be required to have travel insurance before entering the republic.
"The principle of social solidarity will guide access to services for all. No one should be left behind," Maja says. "Citizens who would want to purchase health services that are not covered by the NHI would still be able to do so either out of pocket or through insurance companies that offer complimentary financial services."

and were often facilitated by lawyers and courts, at times without resolution.

"Covid-19 reminded us that we depend on each other. We have been able to forge cooperation between private and public," Mkhize further stated in a one-on-one interview at the fifth annual FORBES AFRICA Philips Future of Health Summit in November. "We need a system that will ensure equitable access to quality healthcare irrespective of class and status or financial standing. Universal health coverage is now a global aspiration."

The NHI Bill has been deliberated for years and the next development is expected to happen in February 2021. The Parliament's portfolio committee on health dealing with the bill said that it plans to submit a report on the comments by then. According to 'BusinessTech', the pandemic had an impact on the process regarding the NHI and parliament which had to go through a mountain of submissions on the bill.

And though the Department of Health is confident that the pandemic has proven that the NHI is necessary, others believe differently, in consonance with the fact that the bill has sparked much debate from various quarters over the years.

"Our economic situation has deteriorated so drastically, that if it was unaffordable before, it's even more unaffordable now. I mean the estimates of costs are hundreds of billions of rands," says Jack Bloom, Democratic Alliance Gauteng Shadow Health MEC, to FORBES AFRICA. Bloom goes on to explain that right now, the state should be focusing on fixing the administration issues in the health sector, including those around poor hospital infrastructure, frustrated medical personnel and delayed surgeries and treatments.

> **"The public healthcare system is under enormous pressure due to a growing population and rise of non-communicable diseases.**

However, Dr Nicolas Crisp, public health specialist and NHI advisor to Mkhize, remains optimistic that the NHI can alleviate some of the problems. He believes that by having the NHI, some of the strain on the private sector can be alleviated.

"This is an ethical matter that needs to be debated between clinicians. It's not a political matter. And it's not a purely budget matter. It's an ethical clinical discussion around what can you give to a patient and it's about what the evidence shows to be the best outcomes for the inputs," Crisp says.

He believes that countries with a single health system have tended to do better than those with more than one. Decisions and actions can be taken swiftly with one system as instructions don't need to be directed to multiple networks. Countries like the United Kingdom and Vietnam already boast such systems.

"So it doesn't matter who's actually delivering the services, it's that there's a coherent mechanism of making decisions and disseminating those decisions. And there's a coherent mechanism of collecting data to one central point," Crisp offers.

He has been a medical practitioner in the public sector from the 90s, consulting not only in South Africa but in other parts of Africa including Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania, Botswana, Namibia and Lesotho. Crisp became the advisor in July this year to assist with the design and development of the administrative and operational capacity to implement the NHI. For just over a year, Crisp has been working with the Department of Health in South Africa looking at the practical implications and requirements to support the NHI fund.

"It is extremely complicated. Let's take just the public sector. At the moment, the money to run the public health services comes from the national fiscus; it is distributed to the provincial governments, the government, and then they are the ones who decide what percentage of that equitable share will go to health, then they inform the National Treasury and the National Department of Health that this is the amount of money they set aside for health," Crisp explains, adding that the private sector is not any better.

There are two ways to pay for healthcare in the private sector. One is where if you are fortunate enough that you can afford it, and you insure yourself through a medical scheme. However, the terms and conditions of this are that you only manage to cover what you can afford, and when it runs out, some are required to use public services.

"The second way that we pay for healthcare in the private sector is that when the need arises, we scramble and raise money," Crisp explains, "And for people who are middle income and relatively poor, the only way they can raise money is to sell assets or to scrounge from their neighbors, friends, and family, and to basically blow their cash reserves to pay for their healthcare. So it's very tenuous, and it's insecure."

But what do the healthcare workers feel about the NHI in South Africa in these pressing times?

It's all good and well to consider the patient but what of those who are in the frontline, tending to them?

Solidarity, a trade union, tells FORBES AFRICA that it believes the NHI can and will destabilize the healthcare sector.

The primary research they did in 2019 amongst medical practitioners in both the private and public sectors threw up a negative response towards it.

Morné Malan, the union's strategic specialist for research and communication, says the report indicated that 83% of medical professionals believe that should NHI be implemented, it will lead to a drastic increase in immigration to other countries; 41% said they would personally consider taking steps to immigrate if

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it is implemented and 21% of healthcare professionals indicated that they have already started taking steps towards immigration.

"The feedback that we're getting from the industry itself is that there's very little confidence in government, and there's very little confidence in the system itself. And you know, this is a crucial factor. Because these are the professionals who are going to be at the frontline," Malan says.

Other than the practical implications around NHI, is the financial and fiscal aspect that it will cost billions. And the concern from the trade unions is who will have to pay for the NHI.

"Only around 12% of South Africa's population pays taxes. Most countries, which do have universal healthcare systems, or I should say, which do have nationalized or socialized medicine, the figure is closer to around 30% plus," Malan says.

"It is the current system that is unstable," Maja says.

"The government currently uses the same amount of money to fund 16% of the population that uses private healthcare as it uses to fund 84% of the population that uses public facilities. The public healthcare system is under enormous pressure due to a growing population and rise of non-communicable diseases amongst other issues."

However, the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) say they have always supported NHI as it provides universal healthcare to everyone, and healthcare should not be divided into the "haves and have-nots".

Nehawu spokesperson Khaya Xaba explains that the coronavirus has proven the need for one healthcare system, and not two.

According to Nehawu, the need is urgent, as currently, the private sector only treats 14% of South Africans, who have medical aid; while 86% of South Africans are treated by the public sector.

"I believe that the outbreak of the coronavirus in the country has proven beyond reasonable doubt that we need the urgent implementation of the NHI," Xaba says.

"Through the NHI, we believe that working together between the two sectors and collapsing them into one will be able to deal with the needs of the country. We will be able to attend to everyone who's sick, even if they don't have money."

Covid-19 may be a stark reminder of the urgent need for a unified healthcare system, but is all of South Africa ready for it yet?

Only time – and perhaps another treacherous jolt from nature – will tell.

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Brand Finance is the world's leading independent brand valuation consultancy. With offices in 20 countries, the company has been associated with the development of the ISO 10668 and ISO 20671 brand evaluation standards.

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Will The United States Re-Engage With Africa?

Although Donald Trump led arguably the most Africa-adverse American administration in history, analysts warn not to expect too much from his successor, Democrat Joe Biden. A look at the likely impact of his win on the US-Africa economic dynamics.

PAULA SLIER AND ALLISON GOSNEY

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HISTORICALLY, IT HAS NOT MATTERED MUCH for Africa whether Democrats or Republicans sit in the White House. This is largely because the United States (US) has never really had a coherent and constructive Africa policy. So, although outgoing Republican president Donald Trump led arguably the most Africa-adverse American administration in history, analysts warn not to expect too much from his successor, Democrat Joe Biden.

Biden was vice-president in the Obama administration that preceded Trump. But whereas Trump once called African countries "shitholes", Biden at least is promising to "re-engage with the world".

"He will be more engaging with countries, including Africa," believes Jannie Rossouw, interim head of Wits Business School in Johannesburg. "Trump really isolated the US from many regions, from very many continents, it was bad relationships all over the place."

Judd Devermont, director of the Africa Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC, agrees.

"I think Biden is going to focus on rebuilding partnerships and that includes at the multilateral level to the state level, to the subnational level," he says.

"So I think you will first see a refocus on climate change and strengthening international adoptions, which will be of benefit to Africans. It's clear that Biden is very supportive of the Continental Free Trade Agreement. That is incredibly important. But he has also talked about the importance of subnational governance and particularly urbanization. And so I think we have the potential to see the next administration work with African countries at these multiple levels to unlock their economies."

> **"It's clear that Biden is very supportive of the Continental Free Trade Agreement.**

Devermont expects the biggest African economies – Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya in particular – to receive significant attention, while the prospects for Ethiopia also look promising.

But Biden has his work cut out for him. Domestic challenges like tackling the Covid-19 pandemic, an economic recession and reckoning with racism are likely to keep him busy during his first few months in office. When his attention finally shifts to international affairs, climate change and trade wars with China can expect to dominate the agenda.

But instead of disparaging Beijing at every turn, like Trump did, Devermont expects there will be a focus on "transparency around norms, around standards, ensuring that African economies are open to US investors. And the more negative elements of a Chinese engagement will be blunted or curbed through shared partnerships with Africans around how foreign countries should invest in their countries, how to form partnerships in their countries."

Another expectation is that American legislation allowing sub-Saharan African countries preferential entry into the US market will be extended.

Rossouw believes that "Biden will try to find a call partner in countries in Africa, and that might be beneficial, especially for the bigger economies in Africa, such as South Africa. If Johannesburg was an independent country, it would be the ninth largest economy in Africa. So naturally, the interest will first be in the big economies and then there will be spillover effects to the smaller economies."

Biden has in the past committed Washington to helping the continent manage the challenges of a burgeoning population. The United Nations' projection that Africa will be home to a quarter of the world's population by 2050 led him to suggest an urbanization initiative.

This would include partnerships between African and American cities planning for growth in critical sectors like energy access, climate change, transportation and water management.

"Urbanization is the key transformation that the continent will undergo in this century and ensuring that African cities, most of whom sit on the coasts, are open for business will be a huge opportunity for US companies," says Devermont. "I wouldn't underestimate how important that initiative, depending on what it develops into, can be for the US-Africa economic relationship."

Equally important is that the Biden administration reach out to companies that remain skeptical or ignorant about opportunities in Africa and address some of the risks and myths they have about investing on the continent.

Trump's mission was to make America great but his administration largely disengaged with one of the world's fastest-growing regions. Time will tell whether his successor fares any better.

A COVID-19 GAME CHANGER.

HOW NEDBANK IS HELPING TRANSFORM THE FRANCHISING INDUSTRY.



Prithivan Pillay
Head of Client Value Propositions at Nedbank

Franchises have long earned their keep through bricks-and-mortar operations built on attracting customers to come in, fill up, gather, mingle and spend money. Covid-19 and the national lockdown have changed that forever, forcing not only the franchising industry, but all businesses to transform and embrace technology even more.

This transformation is happening at an astonishing pace as franchisers and franchisees across the country continue to look for new ways to grow their business networks while reducing pressure and risk.

There have been several key developments and certain trends are starting to take shape as we embark on another journey of discovery and change.

Growth of the cashless society

As stores, restaurants and other merchants opened their doors again following lockdown restrictions, and amid fears of touching payment devices or PIN pads, we saw a big spike in contactless payments as businesses aimed to give consumers a much-needed sense of comfort and reassurance.

Super apps help do business differently

The continued evolution of the mobile device as the ultimate shopping and lifestyle companion is seeing the rise of the super app – the all-encompassing, on-demand, retail-as-a-service ecosystem in the palm of consumers' hands. The latest innovation from Nedbank, Avo, is such a super app, enabling consumers, franchises and businesses to trade differently in these trying times. With Avo, consumers and businesses can transact securely on a single platform for their daily needs. Whether you need home services or groceries, feel like takeaways, or are looking for great tech deals, your next family holiday destination, entertainment options or security solutions, Avo offers these and more.

You can access this platform easily via an app on iOS, Android or PWA (progressive web application), or via the Nedbank Money app.

A changing business model

I believe that Covid-19 has forced franchisers to rethink their business models and adapt to alternative digital and online service models, and with the right investments and strategies, franchisers will not only survive but thrive.

This is where having a banking partner who understands your business pain points is crucial – be it by helping with innovative solutions to address operational challenges, providing flexible finance solutions or connecting you to e-commerce platforms. Our e-commerce platforms enable our Business Banking clients to operate electronically, offering instore and online shopping solutions through QR code acceptance. Through partnering with our clients and following a holistic approach, our flexible financing options can assist them in achieving their business aspirations.

We understand that business owners need a financial partner who can help them see the bigger picture and navigate challenges while unlocking growth.



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NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA

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BY PEACE HYDE

Of The Year

NOT FOR SALE

ABOUT 17 YEARS AGO, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala challenged Nigeria's patriarchy by becoming the longest-serving finance minister, the first foreign minister and most importantly, the first woman to ever hold those positions.

Today, she is on the brink of yet another first, as one of two final contenders for the top post as the seventh Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), a position which will make Okonjo-Iweala the first African and once again the first woman to lead the prestigious international trade body.

Okonjo-Iweala has the largest support, from the group's 164 members across all geographies; this was following a grueling five-month competitive vetting process that began with eight candidates.

The final decision is still awaited and could come anytime.

But hurdles are nothing new for Okonjo-Iweala. As Nigeria's finance minister, serving two terms under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo and President Goodluck Jonathan, Okonjo-Iweala has had to slay her fair share of goliaths in an illustrious career that has spanned over 40 years.

She recounts one particular incident, which she admits as the most traumatic in her life.



Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has been adjudged the '2020 African of the Year'. Previous winners have been Rwandan President Paul Kagame (2018) and African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina (2019).

"My mother was kidnapped and held for five days when I was finance minister. The [kidnappers] thought that killing me would be too merciful and wanted to paralyze me for the rest of my life. When you are fighting powerful people who are corrupt, they fight back in very dangerous ways," says Okonjo-Iweala in an interview with FORBES AFRICA in November, from Washington DC.

All through the ordeal, Okonjo-Iweala stood her ground with the backing of her father and was able to mount enough pressure for the kidnappers to release her 83-year-old mother unharmed.

"I tried to stop paying some corrupt people some money that they were trying to get from the government fraudulently, and with the backing of the president, we said we wouldn't pay. So, they told me to go on radio or TV and resign and leave the country or else they would kill my mother. I thought maybe something would happen to my children or my husband or my siblings, so we were constantly telling our children to be careful and mindful and to be watchful. I never dreamed anyone would touch my parents."

And as if that was not enough, there was also the mammoth issue of Nigeria's $30 billion debt, along with a debt service of about $2 billion a year, which Okonjo-Iweala had been tasked by President Obasanjo to rectify. The call came when she was in the middle of a successful career at the World Bank, where Okonjo-Iweala had worked her way up diligently as a development economist to becoming a Managing Director.

"I moved very fast within the bank. I was enjoying what I was doing. I was doing things that helped people and projects that made a difference like bringing in water supply and increasing agricultural production [and bringing about] better living conditions and that really motivated me a lot. I received my promotions in a timely fashion because I worked hard," says Okonjo-Iweala.

She heeded the call of President Obasanjo to return home and help Nigeria get a firm grip on its enormous debt. In six months, Okonjo-Iweala had already introduced reforms which included reorganizing the bank by removing the six agencies who were supposed to be in charge of Nigeria's debt facility and replacing it with the debt management office which still stands today. She also implemented technological innovations to streamline operations and finally managed to write off $18 billion of the debt owed by Nigeria, before she returned to the World Bank.

"When I came back to the bank after the six-month leave, I was promoted to vice president and corporate secretary for a couple of years before President Obasanjo asked me to come back again and be finance minister. So, I resigned in 2003 and I went to be finance minister for three years and then spent another four years under President Jonathan, which makes a total of seven years."

In her second term as finance minister, she cleared the rest of the debt and focused on transparency and fighting corruption and tried to put the account of the country and the management of finances on a more modern technology platform, which would enable Nigeria to curtail leakages of revenue and salaries.

She was determined to stop the endemic corruption that had plagued Nigeria for years.

"And when you do that, you put yourself in a position of attack constantly so sometimes I couldn't tell whether the attacks were happening because I was trying to block revenue leakages and block corruption or whether I was being attacked because I was a woman or both."

Even in the early years of her career, the goal for Okonjo-Iweala, especially during her tenure at the World Bank, was to always learn as much as possible and rotate between different countries and regions so she could use that knowledge to return

> **"I often say I can sleep on a mud floor as well as a feathered bed and be very comfortable. It has made me someone who can do without things in life because of what we went through.**

Photo by FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP via Getty Images; Simon Dawson/Bloomberg via Getty Images; Photos by Kelechi Amadi Obi; Photo via Getty Images; Photo by ERIC PIERMONT/AFP via Getty Images

NOT FOR SALE



home and help build Nigeria.

Her 25-year career at the World Bank helped her do exactly that. Her passion for the development of Nigeria and Africa is one that was birthed out of conflict. She spent her early childhood with her grandmother in the village of Ogwashi-Ukwu in Delta State Nigeria. Her parents, who were both academics specializing in mathematical statistics and economics and sociology respectively, had received scholarships to study in Germany, which meant they had to leave the young Okonjo-Iweala to learn the lessons of life from her grandmother.

"By the time I was nine, I knew how to cook and take care of things like fetch wood for fire and other practical things. It was a very loving childhood. The majority of my uncles and aunts all had doctorates and were all teaching in universities so I was surrounded by academics. I thought I was going to be an academic and do a PhD, not because it was forced on me, but that is what I saw around me."

Her parents' goal was for Okonjo-Iweala and her six siblings to achieve the highest level of education and use it as a tool in meaningful ways to make an impact and that is exactly what she set out to do.

After completing her primary school education in a village behind her grandmother's house, she went to the Ibadan International School for her secondary education before finishing at Queens School Enugu.

Then, all hell broke loose.

"My education was truncated by the Nigerian Biafra War. We were in the war for three years and this was something that really opened my eyes. It started when I was just entering my teens and finished when I was in my

mid-teens. It was a harrowing time, two of the three years I didn't go to school." The Biafra war, which claimed more than a million Nigerian lives half a century ago, had a long-lasting impact on Okonjo-Iweala.

"My parents lost everything, including all their life savings because they were on the Biafran side. I was eating one meal a day and children were dying. So, I learned to live very fugally. I often say I can sleep on a mud floor as well as a feathered bed and be very comfortable. It has made me someone who can do without things in life because of what we went through," says Okonjo-Iweala.

After the war, she managed to catch up with her education and got accepted into the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom as well as Harvard University in the United States.

"My father said to 'go to Harvard' because my mother was going to Boston University next door so the family thought she could keep an eye on me. Then I moved down the street from Harvard to MIT to do my doctorate and all the while meaning to be an academic."

Not one to rest on her laurels, Okonjo-Iweala is always looking for ways to utilize her remarkable knowledge and experience to help advance Africa. Take for example her work as the Chair of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, responsible for immunizing 760 million children and saving more than 13 million lives. The organization plans to immunize 300 million more children in the next five years and save another eight million lives.

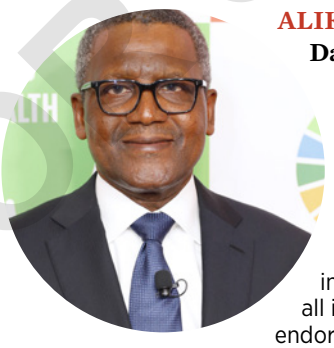
"You can't feel better than that. You have the privilege of working on something that is saving the lives of

"We are signing contracts with companies like Pfizer and AstraZeneca so we can also contract millions of doses so that when developed countries are getting their own vaccines, our own countries will also get some.



ARUNMA OTEH, academic scholar, University of Oxford Former Treasurer and Vice President, World Bank, and London Stock Exchange Africa advisory group member

"I met Dr Okonjo-Iweala in 1989 at an event that the Nigerian community in the World Bank Group organized to celebrate her appointment as Division Chief. She still exhibits today the unique qualities that I observed at the time. They include humility, compassion, and a love of service to humanity. She is a pride of Nigeria, Africa, women and a global icon. She has dedicated her life to helping society be better. Excellence is her mantra and she always ensures she is eminently qualified and prepared for any task that she takes on. She cares passionately for humanity and has spent her career seeking ground-breaking ways to transform society... She led many important reforms that have been transformational for Nigeria. She has worked tirelessly in the private and public sector... She has successfully presented herself for the position of Director-General, World Trade Organization (WTO) and could become the first female and first African to occupy this position."



ALIKO DANGOTE, President, CE, Dangote Group

"In these challenging times, WTO needs the renowned skills and tested experience of Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala to lead the organization through identified obstacles and strengthen its position as the prime facilitator of international trade. A vote for her by all is a step in the right direction. I fully endorse her candidature to lead WTO."
(Quote taken from Twitter)



UZOMA DOZIE, Founder, Sparkle

"Trade has played a key role in the development of people, businesses, industries and nations. It can also carry culture to every corner of the world. Show me a successful nation and I will show you an efficient trading infrastructure and system. We are in the midst of the fourth industrial revolution, powered by technology, whereby we need to develop and deliver trade policies and favorable business environments that will not only create jobs and opportunity for millions more, but that will also create a level playing field to tackle poverty. Trade is both transactional and emotive; when negotiating on the global stage, when working on policy that, when delivered, will affect millions, we need experienced, dynamic and dedicated public global servants in positions of leadership; and this is where Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is well-positioned to take on the next big role."

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INDIAN MANUFACTURERS PAVE THE WAY FOR TWO-WHEELER BOOM IN AFRICA



MR. R DILIP, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT – INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS, TVS MOTOR COMPANY

According to the World Bank, Africa's population is expected to reach 2.8 billion by 2060, which will result in local government's focus on developing and strengthening transport networks. The continent's two-wheeler market is projected to cross US$10 billion by 2022 owing to population, rising urbanisation and absence of reliable public transportation system in most of the African countries. The requirement for last-mile connectivity solutions presents opportunities primarily due to the relatively low penetration of two-wheelers vis-à-vis the total population of the continent. This has resulted in leading global two-wheeler manufacturers from China, Japan and India increasing their presence across the continent.

TWO-WHEELERS IN AFRICA

Africa devised non-conventional modes of public transport through vans and minibuses. More recently, two-wheelers are doubling up as public transport due to requirement of faster conveyance, excellent manoeuvrability offered by the products across the varying landscape, easy two-wheeler financing and the swelling influx of imports from Asian manufacturers.

The African auto market's steady growth is supported by growing employment, improving urban infrastructure and the ability of Asian manufacturers to supply cost-efficient vehicles that are relatively low in maintenance while offering higher mileage. African countries such as Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania have seen significant migration towards Indian two-wheeler brands. The spurt in growth is particularly prevalent in Kenya, where the government has extended tax waivers to both the imports of motorcycles and to local assembly plants.

INDIAN 'TRUST FACTOR'

Customers prefer Indian brands because they offer better quality, durability and higher fuel economy. Furthermore, Indian manufacturers build customised products for the African market as each region has distinct requirements. Therefore, the product portfolio developed by Indian R&D teams for the African markets focuses on catering to diverse customer preferences and the varied terrain. For example: Some markets are facing power shortage, therefore, TVS Motor Company provides thoughtful feature additions such as USB charging port for the customers to avail in case of emergencies.

As most two-wheelers in Africa double up as boda boda, ambulance taxi and two-wheelers, customers are looking for long-lasting and durable products. One challenge which African markets face during international imports of two-wheelers in the absence of complete service support. The lack of necessary service facilities and non-availability of spare parts often hamper the longevity of the vehicle.

TVS Motor Company has been present in Africa for the past two decades offering the complete sale, service and spare support. The company builds multi-utility two-wheelers with fuel-efficient engines and strong suspensions to traverse diverse terrains. TVS Motor has set up its assembly plants via tie-ups with local partners in select countries such as Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria. The company has also set up a supply chain in Egypt and Nigeria. These partnerships have helped in creating local hubs, which in turn have generated employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for close to 1 million local populaces. TVS Motor has been providing staunch support to the market in the on-going pandemic in form of masks, sanitisation and food. All service center employees are trained to take adequate precautions and provide maintenance tips.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The trend of using personal commuting had emerged across the continent in recent years. In a social distancing led world of COVID-19, people will opt for solo and sanitised travel thus creating an opportunity for scooters and bebeks. The delivery sector is also expected to create opportunities for small tonnage two-wheelers along with institutional sales opportunity with government and private sector. In specific markets, ride-hailing apps are emerging.

Indian manufacturers are poised to meet this demand with a wide range of offerings. They are also expanding their network in the African market to offer sustainable mobility solutions to all commuters. The growth of this sector is good news for Africa as it would lead to job creation and increase employment opportunities.



children. More importantly, Gavi is at the center of development and delivery of corporate vaccines," says Okonjo-Iweala. At a time when the world is still grappling with the marauding Covid-19 virus, Okonjo-Iweala's work with Gavi is more important for the African continent than ever before.

"This is cutting-edge to be in the place where we are trying to see which Covid vaccines are going to be efficacious but more importantly, we have developed a facility to get them to poor countries so that poor countries do not have to queue behind. When we had other life-saving vaccines in the past like [for] the H1N1, rich countries bought them up and poor countries had to wait in the queue."

To ensure this doesn't happen again, Okonjo-Iweala and her team have developed the Access to Covid 19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator with the World Health Organization (WHO), Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and Gavi, to look at vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics for impoverished countries. Within this framework, the organization has also developed the Covax facility, which is the vaccines' pillar of the ACT Accelerator to make vaccines available to poor countries.

"We are signing contracts with companies like Pfizer and AstraZeneca so we can also contract millions of doses so that when developed countries are getting their own vaccines, our own countries will also get some. We were able to raise $8.8 million for Gavi and we are busy raising money for Covid to support poor countries. In the short-term, we have raised $1.8 billion for Covid and we are looking to raise $5 billion next year," says Okonjo-Iweala.

She firmly believes there are key lessons for Africa to learn

"Countries are moving away from the use of fossil fuels and even oil giants are moving investments into renewables so, as a country, we also have to start shifting our mindframe because there will come a time when we may not be able to export our oil.



GBENGA OYEBODE, Chairman, Aluko & Oyebode

"Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala represents the very best of what Nigeria and indeed Africa can offer to the world. Her distinguished career at the highest levels of international finance and development, stellar reputation for hard work and integrity, and significant accomplishments in the public and private sectors in Nigeria and internationally, speak for themselves. An exceptional global leader, Dr Okonjo-Iweala is an inspiration to Africans, women and millions across the world who are emboldened by her example to reach for the skies. I have no doubt that she would do an excellent job if given the opportunity to lead the World Trade Organization, particularly at a pivotal time for the global multilateral trade system."



ATEDO PETERSIDE, President, Anap Foundation

"With her unique knowledge, skills, contacts and experience, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala should take her rightful seat at the forefront of the ongoing struggle for the soul of Nigeria."



OSCAR N. ONYEMA, CEO, Nigerian Stock Exchange

"It is my great pleasure to celebrate Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala who continues to make the entire African continent proud. Dr Iweala is a thorough professional, nation-builder, and an inspiration to many. As a renowned economist and finance expert, she has consistently applied her unrivaled expertise in various capacities to drive key reforms and promote sustainable growth both at home and abroad. It would be impossible to forget the critical role she played in leading key reforms in Nigeria, which have contributed significantly to the growth of the Nigerian capital market. She has shattered many glass ceilings over the course of her career being the 'first female' in several positions and she represents the dream of many African women. I am excited to see other great feats Dr Iweala will go on to accomplish."

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post Covid. Firstly, there is the need to shift away from commodity dependence for revenues.

"We must change the structure of our economy and the structure of our revenues. It's not just the structure of our economy because actually Nigeria's economy is quite diversified but we don't tax other sectors properly because we have this money coming from petroleum. So, we have to change all of that and change the structure of our revenue streams and economy in order to survive because the world outside is changing."

Secondly, economies need to develop a robust value-added system to products which means more local manufacturing as well as looking at other types of services and creative industries that can create jobs.

Finally, she believes Africa needs to start focusing more on technology and on going digital by ensuring that the infrastructure for a digital economy and society is being laid across the continent.

"Education will go digital, so will health and manufacturing and e-commerce. For those products we grow, like [in] agriculture, we have to add more value. Nigeria is an oil and gas economy and you can see what is happening with this issue of climate change. Countries are moving away from the use of fossil fuels and even oil giants are moving investments into renewables so, as a country, we also have to start shifting our mindframe because there will come a time when we may not be able to export our oil," says Okonjo-Iweala.

As the world awaits the outcome of the WTO appointment, a move that many across the continent are hoping will lead to a new era of positive trade balance, reduced protectionism and a surge in foreign direct investment for the African continent, Okonjo-Iweala, a mother of four, is yet again poised to use her skills in economic development to create an even greater impact for Africa.

Easily Africa's most prominent citizen this year for leading the charge in the fight for the equitable access of the Covid-19 vaccine, and for taking the continent to the world stage, we ask how she would feel if bestowed with such an honor.

"It makes me feel humble and makes me feel honored. I am sure there are people elsewhere doing equally good things or more and people we don't even know about [doing such things], but I am honored. It is wonderful," says the renowned economist.



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$TILL INVESTED: East Africa's Capital Market$

In East Africa, a recent move to accelerate the merger of stock markets in Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania has brought the regional money markets to the limelight. FORBES AFRICA considers what makes the merger attractive to regional investors, and the challenges it may encounter, in the backdrop of the global economic downturn, set off by the Covid-19 pandemic.

BY MARIE SHABAYA

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IN SEPTEMBER, AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT A World Bank-funded initiative, started in 2015, to merge stock markets in Rwanda [RSE], Tanzania [DSE] and Uganda [USE] was not only going ahead, but would be operational by the end of 2020, sent shock waves through the continental money markets.

The deal combines stock markets in these three countries, worth an estimated $15 billion, in cumulative market capitalization. Arguably, their total value might have been bumped up by Kenya's Nairobi Stock Exchange [NSE], which would have contributed an additional $22 billion. However, the country pulled out in 2015, following a procurement dispute.

What is clear, however, is that the move to link these three regional stock markets, albeit electronically while subtracting the existing barriers to trade across borders, will have a lasting impact on the region's capital markets.

While individually, relatively small, the merger of these national stock markets does have its advantages. The 54 companies listed across all three exchanges are set to benefit from a larger pool of capital and investors, along with an anticipated effect on each currency, the extent of which is yet to be discerned.

Additionally, while Kenya, the region's most mature and largest market by volume, isn't participating, some NSE-listed companies will still be able to trade in the new merged market.

"The advantage is that, even though Kenya is not [included] in [this] joint effort, the largest companies that are currently listed on the NSE; KCB [Kenya Commercial Bank], Equity Bank and East African Breweries would still be listed on there as well. So the big benefits of the merger will still be [felt] by the region," says Dr Frannie Léautier, a seasoned development economist from Tanzania and CEO of SouthBridge Investments, a pan-African asset



Stock markets in Africa are not sufficiently large enough to accommodate the growth of the private sector. For Africa to really get the depth that's needed to support its own development, there is a need to merge the smallest stock markets. When you aggregate Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda, it gives you the scale that is needed.
– Dr Frannie Léautier, a seasoned development economist from Tanzania and CEO of SouthBridge Investments

management firm based in Kigali, Rwanda.

While market conditions across Africa's capital markets vary, some of the challenges they face are universal. Major continental markets continue to struggle with high volatility, macroeconomic uncertainty, liquidity constraints, limited domestic investment, underdeveloped trading practices and settlement structures that are coupled with restricted market information.

It's no different in East Africa, explains Léautier.

"Stock markets in Africa are not sufficiently large enough to accommodate the growth of the private sector. For Africa to really get the depth that's needed to support its own development, there is a need to merge the smallest stock markets. When you aggregate Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda, it gives you the scale that is needed."

Digitization has played a crucial role in this development. This new regional stock market will be electronic, much like the West African virtual exchange, Bourse Régionale des Valeurs Mobilières (BRVM), launched in 1998. Like their counterparts at BRVM, East African investors will now be able to buy and sell shares across the three territories through a singular, online platform without the red tape that previously plagued them.

Despite this, however, the regional money markets still have many milestones to go in terms of maturity. Traditional lending, such as debt financing through banks or institutional lenders, remains dominant. Even while major companies are listed on individual stock markets, the sale of shares is not the de-facto option for most of these firms to raise capital.

"A lot of money just flows through the banks because [our] capital markets are not developed," says Githiora Thuku, from Kenya, who is also a Director at Lion's Head Global Partners, an investment bank working across several emerging and frontier markets, in the United Kingdom.

At the same time, regulations and market conditions are factors regional investors still have to be wary of, post-merger.

"The regulations are just so different. Think about where Pension Funds, for instance, can invest. In Kenya, there is flexibility to take your money off-shore. So, if you want to invest in the US or in Iraq, you can do that with 15% of your money.

"But in Uganda you'll struggle to take your money outside of East Africa. Also, tax regimes are different, too. This merger has been on the cards for a while

and cosmetically it looks interesting. [However], I think the practicalities will be quite different," he posits.

Thuku argues that the mechanics of investing in each of these three markets will be harder to change beyond the ease that the merger will provide. For example, the cost of shares in each territory are influenced by factors outside the purview of the singular stock exchange.

"One of the things investors think about is fees. How much does it cost to buy a stock in Tanzania versus a stock in Uganda if you [consider] commissions and taxes? You can change the face of that investment, like through this [stock market merger] where you can invest across territories but the mechanics of actually investing are harder to change if they are not driven by competition by brokers in each of these countries. Making it easier to invest across the three doesn't [necessarily] make it attractive to invest across the three."

Some of the mechanics that Thuku refers to are the market volatility in each country in addition to the currency question.



"A lot of money just flows through the banks because [our] capital markets are not developed.
– Githiora Thuku, Director at Lion's Head Global Partners



While East Africa operates an economic bloc that eases cross-border trading for regional businesses thanks to certain regulatory instruments, each country still has a sovereign currency, unlike the CFA Franc in West Africa.

For investors, currency fluctuations and other domestic considerations need to be made when buying stock across these markets.

While we have to wait for listing and market performance data to analyse how this new stock exchange bloc will regulate or influence the cost of capital, we can speculate on its direction within the region, based on some of the factors it's already impacting, says Rafael Agung', Chief Economist at NCBA Group, a leading Kenyan commercial bank.

"It will [definitely] raise access and [this] makes it easier for potential issuants to access capital," he explains.

The merger also offers potential for investors from outside the region, particularly in spreading risk across portfolios.

"At a very generic level, it provides portfolio diversification opportunities if you are playing the broader pan-African markets. You can have access to a new asset class, in that sense, as an investor. The opportunity I see is the risk diversification component of [this stock market merger]... if you are an allocator

Photos supplied; Image via Getty

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of capital, from outside the region, and you are looking to expand, you now have access to the 'IPO' route and you can begin to look at ways of attracting local capital, via issuance, to support your pan-African expansion within the region, for example," notes Agung'.

As Thuku suggests, Agung' also notes that the singular East African exchange will do little to sway the long-held preference of bank lending to the traditional capital markets, in terms of raising capital, for most firms in the region.

"There's a huge historical learning about bank-led economic models which is what we have in Africa, and particularly in East Africa, as opposed to traditional capital market raises as you have in the United States. In this region, there is an almost lazy acceptance and dominance of the bank lending channel, as opposed to the capital markets that, to me, will be something that will take a while to remove. But the [stock market merger] provides a potential opportunity for issuers who want to raise capital and now have a platform to do so within the region."

Despite its complexities, the soon-to-be consolidated East African stock exchange will allow for developments much greater than the ease of investment, insists Léautier.

According to her, the singular stock market is a springboard to achieve the long-held ambitions of the East African Community.

"It will become the channel through which regional integration can happen [within East Africa] because if you can invest across borders, you not only grow the trade between countries but also the flow of finances [and] people, which is really important for regional integration."

SHE IS CHANGING THE WORLD OF MARKETING - ONE CAMPAIGN AT A TIME!

Nontokozo Madonsela shares her journey to anchoring her position in the world of marketing in South Africa.

It all started from outgrowing studying BCom Accounting to embracing her calling in marketing. This birthed the woman we now know as a marketing guru. Nontokozo Madonsela is a valiant force to be reckoned with.

Nontokozo gathered her blackbelt in marketing from working in several major companies, namely Standard Bank, British American Tobacco, Coca-Cola, South African Breweries as well as Hollard. It's no surprise that she now fills the role of Group Chief Marketing Officer at Momentum and Metropolitan Holdings (MMI). Nontokozo's accolades involve winning the Avance Media: Most Influential Young South African Business Leader award. She has improved the Customer Satisfaction Index by 4.4% through the Standard Bank What's Your Next? campaign. She has successfully repositioned the Momentum Metropolitan brand, resulting in the brand regaining relevance in the market for the first time since the 2010 merger. All of that while judging the AdFocus 2019 awards and participating in The Small Big Business Show.

She recently spear-headed major campaigns such as Momentum Women's Month campaigns, No Apology For My Success and the She Owns Her Success campaign. Both campaigns were centered around encouraging women to recognize their strengths and unabashedly celebrating their achievements. "No Apology For My Success was my first big campaign. It featured many layers that addressed the unequal gaps for women. The reasons for my passion behind these projects were because the campaigns fitted perfectly with what Momentum cares about."

Nontokozo admits that she's had to learn from her mistakes in the past two decades. "I had instances where I would have to face the wrath of leadership for not managing budgets tightly. I also struggled to navigate corporate politics with finesse." She managed to overcome these by surrounding herself with incredible thinking partners to help create different perspectives on her lows.



Nontokozo Madonsela, Group Chief Marketing Officer: Momentum Metropolitan Holdings

When asked about the evolution of marketing Nontokozo says that marketers are an essential part of the company operational organization, "We're the scientists because with our limited financial resources and shrunken production timelines - we still deliver good content and fast." She added that there are certain mistakes that marketers should combat in order to ensure the growth of the sector's importance, such as avoiding poor insights and superficial human truths.

Her advice for women who are starting to take up executive chairs is for them to follow their heart. "Passion is a huge part of what drives me and without passion, one can limit the extent of the impact that they can make." She concluded.

'Empowering Women And Youth Key To Unlocking Malawi's Economic Potential '



Photo by AMOS GUMULIRA/AFP via Getty Images

Early this year, at the inception of the Covid-19 pandemic, Malawi was also battling for democracy. When Lazarus Chakwera became President in June, his win was hailed as a victory for democracy and justice. Born in Lilongwe to a subsistence farmer, the philosophy and theology graduate leads a nine-party coalition, the Tonse Alliance. He spoke to FORBES AFRICA in this exclusive interview about taking on the reins during the pandemic and his plans for the country's future.

Q. What has changed in the few months you have been in office in the midst of a pandemic?

A. My first task when I came into office was to change the direction of our country. Ours had been a country deeply entrenched in systematic corruption, greed, nepotism, executive arrogance and economic atrocities committed by a huge cartel of state criminals. That's why we are talking of changing direction for this sinking ship. That change of direction is embedded in my administration's Super Hi5 Agenda, which is a blueprint for the plan to transform our country's approach to governance. The tenets of this agenda are servant leadership, uniting Malawians, prospering together, ending corruption, and the rule of law. To execute this agenda, we have put together a formidable team of cabinet members committed to the renewal of Malawi, close to 40% of who are women.

Q. How have you managed to deal with the health and economic ramifications of the pandemic so soon into your new role?

A. The Covid-19 pandemic is such a colossal challenge that requires a complex cocktail of both domestic and international interventions. At a local level, we have focused on supporting our fragile health system in its provision of care for Covid-19 patients, campaigning vigorously with messages for preventive behaviors across our society, monitoring the inflow of travelers across our points of entry from Covid-hit countries, setting up a robust nationwide infrastructure for testing suspected cases, and curating innovative ways to support economic activity and income security for the most vulnerable of our people.

At an international level, we have worked relentlessly to forge partnerships with other nations and international corporations to scale up and fast-track our access to and mobilization of funds, expertise, and medical supplies for our fight against Covid-19.

In my capacity as President, I have also used my addresses at various global fora to call for a wide range of interventions

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for countries like mine, including debt cancellation and favorable terms for the movement of supplies and goods we need to sustain our fight and our economy.

Q. What initiatives do you plan to undertake in your first year in office?

A. We have no time to waste, which is why we hit the ground running. We have embarked on reforms in all the departments of government, a high priority initiative housed within the Presidency through the Office of the Vice President. Secondly, we have engaged to stimulate our economy towards both our job creation and economic productivity agendas, including the passing of a budget that delivers on our key economic promises. Thirdly, we have implemented the Affordable Inputs Program that will revolutionize the agricultural sector and guarantee food security for our rural masses. Fourthly, we have strengthened both the judiciary and law-enforcement agencies with sufficient funding and autonomy to uphold the rule of law without political interference, which now makes Malawi a stable environment for foreign direct investments. Fifthly, I have rolled out an ambitious and necessary Climate Change Agenda, which includes the inauguration of a National Clean-Up Day.

Q. Africa is one of the youngest continents, how do you plan on involving more youth in government?

A. Malawi's population now stands at 17.5 million, of which 75% are youth and 51% are women. This means that empowering youth and women is key to unlocking the economic potential of Malawi as a whole. To achieve this, my administration is launching the National Youth Service which I promised before taking office. In the short term though, we are training youth in business, vocational, livelihood and technical skills. We are providing startup tools and equipment and linking the youth to financial lending institutions to commodify their innovations.

We have also embarked on a nationwide project to rehabilitate existing youth centers, build new sports centers, including the National Netball Complex and a Sports Academy. Principally, my administration intends to ensure that services rendered to young people are designed with input from young people, which is why within the first two months of my administration, I held a Youth Summit to get the best ideas from young people for implementation at the highest level.

Q. What are your plans in turning Malawi into an economic hub like South Africa or Nigeria?

A. The success of Malawi's economy, going forward, will be anchored on solid institutional foundation, a thriving private sector, and an environment that is conducive to foreign investment, youth and women empowerment, and zero tolerance to corruption. We will continuously carry out public sector reforms in order to achieve these goals.

Q. You have put the fight against corruption at the top of the agenda. How are you dealing with it?

A. In the first place, my administration is equipping and resourcing the arms and institutions leading the fight against corruption to ensure their autonomy, including the Anti-Corruption Bureau, the judiciary, the police service and others. You will see that reflected in the recent funding allocations in the national budget that we presented and approved by the National Assembly. To complement these institutional efforts, I have made it my business to position my administration to lead by example in the handling of public resources, demanding that all members of my cabinet declare their assets.

Q. How will you ensure that individuals who plundered government resources are prosecuted?

A. By promoting the independence of bodies constitutionally mandated to prosecute suspects of corruption and holding those at the helm of those bodies to public scrutiny and account.

Q. There are so many expectations by Malawians that your presidency will solve almost all challenges. This could be a tall order. How do you plan not to lose the trust of the citizens?

A. Public trust is lost through lack of integrity, lack of service, lack of empathy, and lack of accountability. I plan to stay in front of these landmines by avoiding and removing anything that has the potential to foster such.

Q. What initiatives or changes will you bring to the health system of Malawi and when do you expect them to be implemented?

A. My administration's vision for the health sector is to give all Malawians access to quality, equitable and affordable healthcare through the Universal Health Coverage. The following key interventions will be of focus in our approach: Scaling up the provision of sexual and reproductive health services, we have a goal to eliminate AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. My administration is implementing a National Strategic Plan for the HIV response, which aims at 95-95-95 coverage targets for diagnosis, treatment, and viral suppression by 2025. We are eradicating all forms of malnutrition and as a step towards that, 76 nutritionists across the country have been trained and employed to lead the efforts. Another one of my administration's most daring goals is the eradication of Malaria, and we will soon be launching the 'Zero Malaria Campaign" to support community awareness. We are strengthening Community Health Infrastructure by constructing more health posts as we work towards our long-term goal to put health services within walking distance of every Malawian.

Q. What final message would you have for Malawians and Africans across the world?

A. We can achieve more together than apart, but to work together, we must have the courage to see the things that unite us, not the things that divide us.

– Interviewed by Karen Mwendera

‘We’re Going To Get This Continent Right’

Emma Inamutila Theofelus is Namibia’s youngest minister hoping to turn around the fortunes of Africa’s youth.

BY KAREN MWENDERA



EMMA INAMUTILA THEOFELUS IS NOT YOUR average 24-year-old.

She is the Deputy Minister of Information and Communication Technology in Namibia, and at the top, represents her country’s majority demographic – the youth.

First appointed by President Hage G. Geingob as a Member of Parliament (MP), and then also as Deputy Minister in March this year, her immediate task was public communication on the government’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

“I have learned that in a time of crisis, people panic and are susceptible to unverified information. I have also observed that citizens need to hear the same messaging in order to start believing it and trusting the source,” says the young politician, who was born and raised in Katutura, a township in Namibia’s capital Windhoek.

There is the obvious issue of the glaring age gap between her and the parliamentarians she works with, but she says she does not let that intimidate her.

“We all started somewhere. I am not new to leadership and can leverage the skills I have learned in my activism to make a success of this role. Quite frankly, I believe I am well on my way,” says Theofelus, also a social justice lawyer.

In her dual role as MP and deputy minister, she plans to continue influencing decisions and laws made in the interest of young people.

“In my specific role, I have set out some key goals being that of communicating the programs of government effectively and so far we have done well in setting up a Government Information Centre. Secondly, I want to optimize the use of our Multi-Purpose Community Centres which act as ICT hubs for communities who have limited access to ICT. Thirdly, I want to help bridge the digital divide in the country through the prioritization of setting up ICT infrastructure,” she says.

Previously, Theofelus has worked as the Legal Officer at the Ministry of Justice, Vice Chairperson of the Global Entrepreneurs Network Namibia Board, the Commissioner of UNESCO Namibia and Junior Mayor of the City of Windheok.

“She is seen as a beacon of hope, so she has the youth vote and the youth support,” says Luis Munana, a FORBES AFRICA 30 Under 30 list-maker in 2019 from Namibia. “Everybody is waiting for the old guys to leave so that new change comes into the country because we are tired of the old system as it is not really serving the people.”

> **“We all started somewhere. I am not new to leadership and can leverage the skills I have learned in my activism to make a success of this role. Quite frankly, I believe I am well on my way.**

Theofelus adds diversity to Namibia’s government, following in the footsteps of the first woman to serve as the Prime Minister of Namibia, Saara Kuugongelwa.

The fight to advance women’s empowerment and youth development on the continent has been a top priority for many countries, which has seen most governments appoint female leaders. In neighboring Botswana, trade economist and consultant Bogolo Kenewendo was only 29 when she was appointed Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry. In 2018, Zimbabwe appointed Kirsty Coventry, former Olympics swimmer and world record holder, as the minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation. Vera Daves De Sousa became Angola’s finance minister last year at the age of 35.

Back in Namibia, to Africa’s youth, Theofelus says: “We are going to get this continent right.”

Photo supplied

NOT FOR SALE

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE MUST BE THE KEY TO AFRICA'S RECOVERY AND FUTURE PROSPERITY

By Sunil Kaushal, CEO, Standard Chartered, Africa & Middle East



Sunil Kaushal, CEO, Standard Chartered, Africa & Middle East

Africa has always promised a myriad of growth opportunities, underpinned by bountiful natural resources and the world's youngest population, but its potential has constantly been dragged down by a chronic lack of infrastructure and investment.

While many African nations have scored highly in their response to Covid-19, the global malaise triggered by the pandemic is still having a devastating impact on the continent's economies.

Now, as African nations look to post-Covid recovery, they have an opportunity to adopt a new approach to investment that will help their economies bounce back faster, better and more resilient than before: sustainable finance.

The concept of sustainable finance encompasses numerous investment channels, including Environment, Social and Governance (ESG), ethical investing, impact investing, low carbon investing, responsible investing, social investing, Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) and sustainable living.

Mobilising capital to fund Africa's development poses a monumental investment opportunity. Let's look at one striking example of how investment can drive growth: if internet access was expanded to an additional 10 per cent of sub-Saharan Africa's population, it would fuel growth of up to 4 percentage points in the region's real per capita GDP.

Although a sizable investment opportunity lies in funding sustainable development, an equally significant funding gap remains, mainly driven by hurdles that hinder the deployment and mobilisation of capital to Africa's most vulnerable sectors.

The investment required to bridge this funding gap, which stands at over $500 billion per year until 2030, cannot be provided by governments and NGOs alone. As Africa's public sector tackles mounting capital deficits, wherein 20 of 54 African countries are either in or at high risk for debt distress, the private sector must intervene. Standard Chartered's Opportunity2030 study cites that the private sector faces an investment opportunity of $394 billion to fund Africa's achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

According to the $50 Trillion Question report published by Standard Chartered, which looks at what the world's largest investor are doing to help drive sustainable development in emerging markets to help meet the SDGs, we found that that almost two thirds of their investments are going to developed markets (Europe and North America), while 3 per cent is being directed to Africa. With Covid-19 making harder for emerging markets to get the investment they need, it is evident that investors need to expand their focus beyond developed markets.

Banks and financial institutions (FIs), specifically, are instrumental in financing Africa's ability to deploy sustainable solutions in key areas of development. Innovative financing models, such as blended finance, should be utilised as key vehicles to incentivise and catalyse private sector contribution to bridge this funding gap. Blended finance, an investment channel that allows private sector capital to be funneled towards projects that are of societal benefit, also offers a valuable opportunity to attract philanthropic funds' participation through its unique layered profile.

Short-term financing, although necessary, will not suffice entirely. Banks and FIs must also integrate sustainable considerations throughout their long-term growth strategies and play a hands-on role in facilitating sustainable projects. For instance, Standard Chartered has financed the construction of a facility which provides water to four districts in Zambia, satisfying the water needs of over 1.7 million people every day.

Time is running out for Africa to achieve a sustainable future, but the opportunity is ripe for the picking. Through private sector contribution, both investors and investees in Africa's sustainable development can realise significant returns.



The Year That *Changed* Everything

2020. UNEXPECTED. UNPRECEDENTED. THE YEAR A VIRUS TORE THROUGH THE CORE OF OUR BEING, AND ASSAILED OUR HEALTH SYSTEMS AND THE WELLBEING OF OUR ECONOMIES. ITS EFFECTS RICOCHETED THROUGH EVERY STREET, EVERY ALLEY OF SOUTH AFRICA. FORBES AFRICA TRAINED ITS LENS ON THE NEW REALITY THE YEAR IS LEAVING BEHIND.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS:
MOTLABANA MONNAKGOTLA AND CHANEL RETIEF

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The Last Mile

When Kagiso Ramphela (*above*) started Ramphela Funerals, a funeral parlor, just before Covid-19 struck South Africa, he never anticipated what was in store. Deemed essential services during the pandemic, his business, in a bizarre twist of fate, picked up. "I don't want to say business is booming, because it sounds like I am saying for business to boom, people must die. But what I will say is I think things have been fair to us," Ramphela says, scratching his head, when we meet him at his office in Soweto, Johannesburg. In this business, he always expects the unexpected, and this could mean calls in the middle of the night, from harried relatives requesting caskets for their loved ones. Ramphela needs to also ensure his staff is protected and safe from the virus at all times, whilst providing support to grieving families.



Coping With Loss

"There's no closure," says Charlie Mpogeng standing by his brother's grave at Westpark Cemetery in Emmarentia, west of Johannesburg. On the morning of July 17, he lost his 37-year-old brother, Herman Motlhabane, to Covid-19. "Everyone loved and respected him," remembers Mpogeng. "We were dressed in PPE gear to go see his body at the funeral home. We had to come out, take off the PPE, and get sanitized. And then immediately I had to get on to a call with the undertaker. There was no time to sit down and be like, 'oh, snap I just lost my brother'." At the funeral, those in attendance had to observe social distancing and the ceremony only lasted a little over an hour. This is a familiar story for most who have lost a loved one to the pandemic this year. As of mid-November, South Africa recorded over 20,000 Covid-related deaths.



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A Brake On Business

With most of the country reverting to a new Work-From-Home reality in the wake of Covid-19, South Africa's taxi industry took a hard knock. In June, taxi associations across Johannesburg announced that they would be increasing their fares from a minimum of R11 to R30 ($1) a trip, also lamenting the lack of adequate government relief. New regulations stipulate that public vehicles are only allowed to carry 70% of their maximum capacity, and to mandatorily practise social distancing, mask-wearing and hand sanitizing. Public taxis are a popular mode of transport for daily wage earners and office commuters, especially in South Africa's sprawling townships. Another business that braked to a screeching stop? The neighborhood car-wash facility.

Unemployment Woes

ACCORDING TO THE *NATIONAL INCOME DYNAMICS STUDY-CORONAVIRUS RAPID MOBILE SURVEY*, APPROXIMATELY THREE MILLION SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS DUE TO COVID-19. DISGRUNTLED UNIONS CAME TOGETHER IN A NATIONWIDE PROTEST (AS IN THIS IMAGE TAKEN IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT OF JOHANNESBURG) ON OCTOBER 7 AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT, WAGE DISPUTES AND JOB LOSSES. SOME DEMANDS WERE RELATED TO COVID-19 CORRUPTION, THE FAILING ECONOMY, AND THE FACT THAT DUE TO A SETBACK IN THE GOVERNMENT'S WAGE AGREEMENT, WORKERS MAY NOT RECEIVE SALARY INCREASES IN THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR.





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Off-Track

THE PANDEMIC ALSO DERAILED THE RAIL INDUSTRY, WITH A REPORTED SURGE IN CABLE THEFT AT RAILWAY STATIONS. *REUTERS* REPORTED THAT DURING THE LOCKDOWN – IMPLEMENTED IN VARIOUS STAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA SINCE MARCH – ORGANIZED, SOMETIMES ARMED, CRIMINAL GANGS STOLE VALUABLE COPPER FROM THE RAILWAY LINES. AS PART OF HIS ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN, PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA HAS PROPOSED THE PRIVATIZATION OF SOME OF SOUTH AFRICA'S KEY TRAIN ROUTES IN A BID TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT ACCESS TO MILLIONS OF SOUTH AFRICANS.

Butt Seriously



One of the most controversial lockdown regulations in South Africa was the banning of the sale of cigarettes. This forced many to either resort to more expensive, often 'illegal ways' to source their smoking stock, or quit altogether.

The Research Unit on the Economics of Excisable Products, based at the University of Cape Town, and the South African Medical Research Council's Dr Catherine Egbe, found that nearly a million people quit smoking during the lockdown.

On the other hand, British American Tobacco South Africa (BATSA) released a media statement in July saying that research shows 11 million smokers in South Africa are still able to purchase cigarettes from illicit suppliers.

"These illicit suppliers are not suddenly going to become compliant and start obeying the law and paying taxes when the ban is eventually lifted. They evaded taxes before the lockdown, they've made billions tax-free during the ban and they will evade taxes after the ban," said BATSA's Head of External Affairs Johnny Moloto in July.



Something to Wine About

Another point of contention was the back and forth regarding the ban on alcohol during the lockdown. This impasse specifically had a negative impact on the country's bars and restaurant businesses.

The Restaurant Association of South Africa (RASA) CEO Wendy Alberts says the hard lockdown put a strain on several restaurants that have had to permanently close their doors.

RASA ran a survey in which 23,000 restaurants across South Africa participated (during alert level two of the lockdown). Of that, 30% stated they have shut down while 50% said they do not know if they will be able to reopen due to massive overheads and debt.

"I am very heartsore for those restaurants that have lost their businesses and staff that have lost their jobs. So although this appears to be a win, there is no win in this space because people have lost, and people have been hurt," says Alberts.

With lockdown restrictions now eased, the restaurants and bars are slowly returning to life. In this image, taken at SOD in Soweto, the South African summer seems to have revived conviviality in outdoor spaces.


CLINT SMITH
Raj Naidoo
Black legends
R.I.P.
Rest In Peace Lockie!!
RIP NAT "Lockie"
LARNIE
MOM'S BOY
RIP
REST IN PEACE
LOCKIE THE LARNIE
REST WELL
RIP OUR BOY!
Fly high with the Angels little one
Rest Well
BE STILL
MATTHYS
PASTER
WE WILL
REST PEACE BOY
RIP
FROM MORRIS
FROM WYNTOD



Art Of The Matter

A child rides past a mural painted in August by South African artist Graham Mckuur, known as 'Dimms', on Kremetart Street in Eldorado Park Ext 3. The work is in tribute to Nathaniel Julius, a 16-year-old allegedly shot and killed by police in Johannesburg's Eldorado Park. The teenager had Down Syndrome, which sent shockwaves on social media. According to *BBC Africa*, the family said Julius was shot for not answering police officers' questions. News reports say that three officers have been arrested on charges of murder.



Room For Change

2020 DEFINITELY CHANGED THE WAY WE WORK. THE HARD LOCKDOWN IN LEVEL ONE OF THE PANDEMIC SAW EMPTYING OFFICE SPACES, UNTIL AROUND ALERT LEVEL THREE WHEN MOST COMPANIES GRADUALLY HAD STAFF TRICKLING IN TO WORK. BUT WITH COVID-19 STILL A SORE REALITY, MOST OFFICE-GOERS HAVE SLIPPED INTO THE WORK-FROM-HOME MODE FOR LONGER, OR INDEFINITELY. THIS HAS ALSO AMPLIFIED DIGITALIZATION AND THE NEED FOR COMPANIES TO QUICKLY STREAMLINE TECHNOLOGY TO ENABLE BETTER WORK FLOW PROCESSES. THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION HAS ALSO BEEN REPORTING ON THE RISE OF THE 'FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE'. THE FINAL WORD ON THE FUTURE WORKPLACE IS STILL BEING SCRIPTED.



BEYOND THE BLAZE

With shrinking glaciers and raging fires, climate change is impacting the diverse ecosystem on Africa's highest mountain in more ways than one.

BY INAARA GANGJI

IN MID-OCTOBER, THE Kilimanjaro conservation area in Northern Tanzania, home to the highest free-standing mountain in the world and UNESCO World Heritage Site, was ravaged by a deadly forest fire across 90sqkm of pristine green earth.

Although the inferno was reportedly the result of a careless fire lit to cook food, it required an army of volunteers and firefighters to contain it.

Together, they spent tireless days engulfed in smoke, ashes and uncertainty to save flora and fauna and the mighty mountain that millions of people in both Kenya and Tanzania rely on for subsistence.

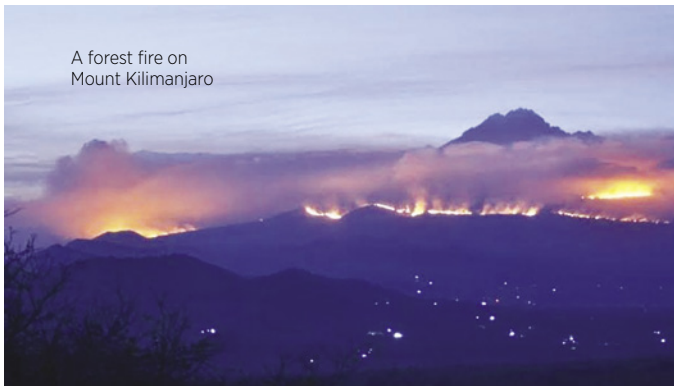
The lush alpine vegetation in the shadow of the majestic 5,895m Mount Kilimanjaro has had humanity in awe for centuries. But the fire was not an isolated incident. Environmental experts opine that the effects of climate change will continue to be seen on the mountain, regarded as one of Africa's most diverse and unique ecosystems.

"We observed on Kilimanjaro, that the climate is getting drier and therefore, these fires are becoming more frequent... [but] all the people are thinking about are the glaciers on Kilimanjaro," says Hemp Andreas, a researcher from the University of Bayreuth in Germany, who has been studying the vegetation on the mountain since the late 80s.

"Decreasing rainfall patterns recorded on the ground in the area also confirm this," says Mateso Said, a researcher at the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science

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“We observed on Kilimanjaro, that the climate is getting drier and therefore, these fires are becoming more frequent…


A forest fire on Mount Kilimanjaro


Floods on the southern slope of Kilimanjaro

and Technology in Arusha, Tanzania, very close to the mountain. Said studies the impact these changes have on local communities.

However, Andreas says glaciers on the Kilimanjaro are an accurate indicator of regional climatic changes. There has been a steady decrease in their size for the last 130-150 years, signaling a clear change in climate on the mountain.

“Today, maybe they have only 90% of the glaciers recorded in 1911. So it’s really a major loss,” he adds.

Changes in solar radiation can be to blame for this loss, not temperature change, since the glaciers are high up, but there is a clear anthropogenic impact too.

Coupled with increased emission of greenhouse gases, and the deforestation of 50% of the forest bed in the last hundred years, means that there is less moisture in the air, which directly leads to the shrinking of glaciers and also increased fires, says Andreas.

In 2000, Andreas and his colleagues surveyed the extent of tree loss and submitted a report to the Tanzanian government, who then decided to include the forest space into the National Park conservation area, which was not previously the case. This significantly reduced deforestation.

“We conduct regular monitoring and research programs which help us identify changes on the mountain.

Based on the findings, we normally develop strategies and policies which aim at mitigating the impact of these observed changes,” says Allan Kijazi, conservation commissioner at Tanzania National Parks, under which the Kilimanjaro conservation area falls.

But this did not mean the fires stopped. “Since 1979, we have been able to detect the extent of the fires using remote sensing, satellite imagery... we can say that there was a certain increase of fire intensity and extent of the fires,” says Andreas.

There are fires set on purpose for ecological reasons too, adds Said. This is for nutrient recycling but also to avoid larger, deadly fires that can impact the communities that rely on the mountain, and tourism, which contributes greatly to the economy.

Some would blame over-tourism for climatic changes too, but the Kilimanjaro is underutilized, says Kijazi.

However, many of these fires are caused by careless and illegal honey collectors or campfires, but they would’ve never been as devastating if the climate was not drier, asserts Andreas. The higher temperature and winds contribute.

More fires mean that the forest is replaced by low Erica evergreen shrubs that burn easily, according to Andreas. Erica becomes dominant because it is able to resprout from stumps after fires and this increases the danger of another fire. This is somehow a never-ending circle that threatens biodiversity.

“Forest fires are much more ecologically significant than glaciers melting. Glaciers only contribute to about 5% of the hydrology of the mountain,” says Said.

It’s the forests that reportedly contribute up to 20 million more times to the water supply and hydrology of the mountain.

But the biggest threat these fires have are on the communities that rely on the mountain.

Less forest means less water streaming down the mountain and given the increasing population reliant on it, this is of serious concern, at times, even resulting in water conflicts.

Coffee crops have almost disappeared too, and now replaced with short-term crops.

“Climate change is not favoring coffee production,” says Said.

This is of concern too as most communities in the area depend on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods.

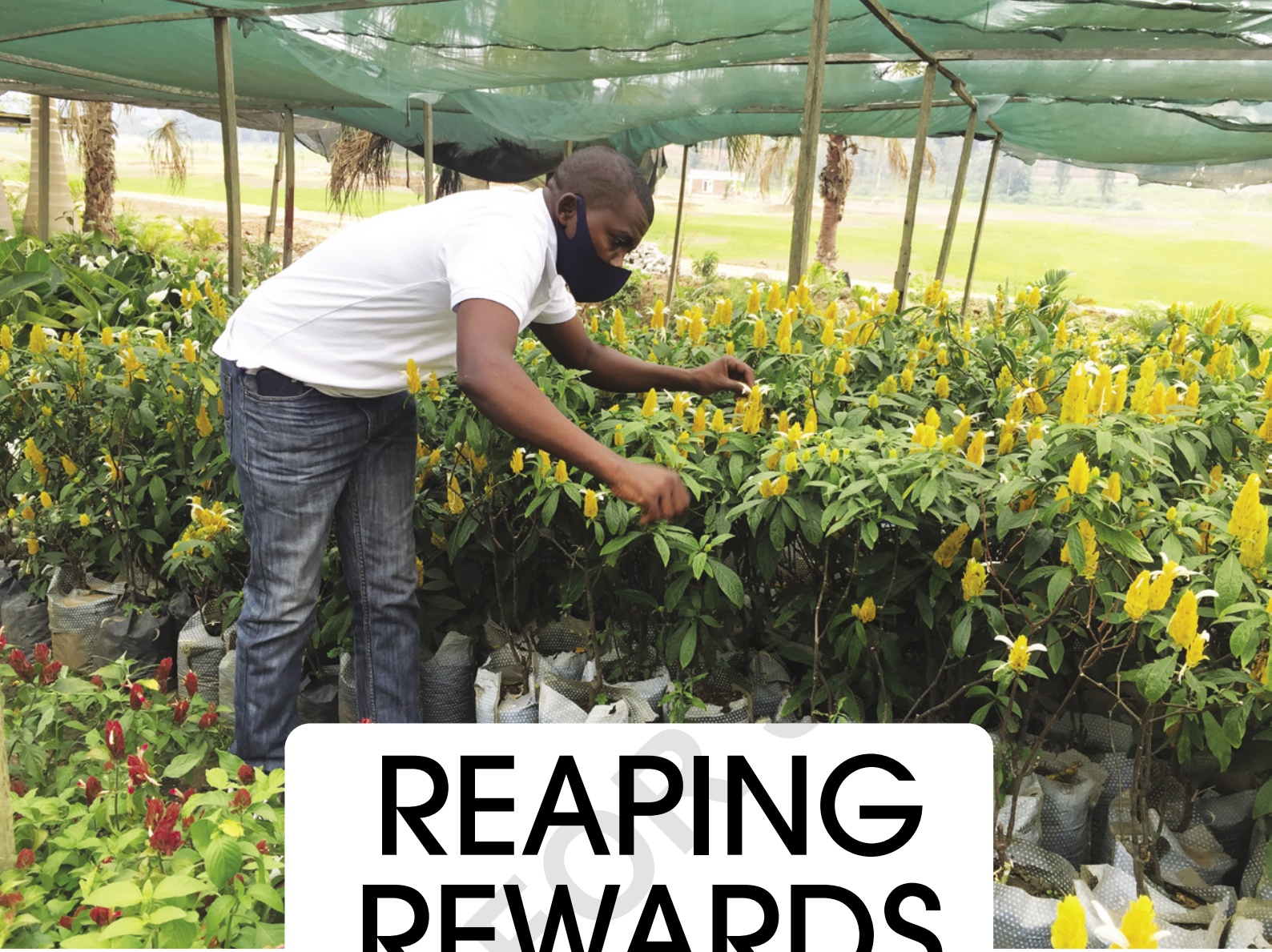
His research has shown that the forest has shrunk 6% from 1993 to 2018. This threatens the resources used in the tourism industry.

“There is need for more resources to research the ecology of the mountain and more people-focused approaches to combat the impact climate change is having,” says Mateso.

Relying on outside funding, the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA) is working hard to try to keep the mountain ecologically intact, through research and in close collaboration with communities.

“The complete disappearance of the glacier is not likely, but the livelihoods of the people living on the mountain slopes need to be prioritized,” he says.

Photos supplied



REAPING REWARDS

In green Kigali, Viateur Ndahayo is adding his own aesthetic touch to the city with his booming flower business.

BY STEVEN MUVUNYI

NOT FOR

RWANDA IS RENOWNED FOR ITS GREEN AND immaculate public spaces. And 35-year-old Viateur Ndahayo is a flower farmer playing his part, beautifying the capital city of Kigali with his ornamental flora.

At Gacuriro, a leafy neighborhood in Kigali, dressed in a white shirt and blue jeans, Ndahayo shows us around his RWF250 million ($253,000) nursery. He has come a long way to be in this prized spot.

After primary school, he could not pursue his secondary education due to limited means. As a firstborn, he had to help his widowed mother bring up his siblings.

"I was competent and excelled in my studies but my mother's land was too small to finance our education," he recalls.

With a heavy heart, Ndahayo made the decision to drop out of school and concentrate on growing flowers.

Little did he know he was sowing the seeds for a successful future.

"I grew flowers as an experiment because it was not a common activity here. Only one Belgian company used to do it," he says. Ndahayo explains that when the Belgians flew back home from Rwanda, the people who took over their business weren't doing it right.

"I had never seen colored plants before as I was used to green ones. They caught my attention and made me very inquisitive. And creative.

"I didn't envisage a profitable business growing flowers, I was just driven by passion."

He had no formal training but started selling in 2000.


Ndahayo giving directions to his workers

"I realized I could make a living from this and even employ others if I put in more effort."

But he needed land, seeds and equipment.

"I knew the project would succeed but had no money to finance it. So I approached a friend of mine who had three goats. I pitched my project to him and convinced him to sell them."

"They paid us RWF21,000 ($21) but my friend changed his mind after a while because he saw no immediate profit," recounts Ndahayo. He returned the capital three months later.

"What pleases me is that afterwards, he realized I had not lied. I taught him the business and he's doing well."

Ndahayo lived on the outskirts in Nduba and had to travel to Kigali to sell his products. "I had to package up to 10 flower vases in a carton and carry them on my head because I had no transport. I would receive RWF1,000 ($1) to RWF3,000 ($3) for each."

Slowly, he established connections and made a name for himself. The journey required courage and patience.

"At times, I felt hesitant about what I was doing and my colleagues thought I was crazy. But the passion I had kept me going," he says.

Ndahayo conducted his own research and consulted others, thereby developing expertise in the trade over time.

"I made mistakes but drew lessons from them. It cost me a lot but benefitted me in the end."

In 2008, he set up his own nursery.

It was the year he started reaping the fruits of his labor.

Today, he boasts nurseries with up to 270 types of flowers and plants such as Hemerocallis, Agapanthus blue, Roystonea palm and Ixora red, to name a few. He has become the go-to flower grower in Kigali.

"If you can't find a given flower here, don't expect to find it anywhere else," one of Ndahayo's customers tells FORBES AFRICA.

Ndahayo claims to have mentored most of Kigali's flower farmers.

While his profits vary depending on seasons and other aspects, he says he makes a minimum of $1,000 a month. If he wins a bid to supply flowers, that could go up a staggering 50 times.

> **"I didn't envisage a profitable business growing flowers, I was just driven by passion.**

He says the fact that Rwanda is a country that cares about cleanliness and the environment has been an enabling factor for his business. Nonetheless, he believes more support could be provided to those in flower farming.

"For example, you can't go to a bank and secure a loan for this business. They'll tell you we don't trust it. But I'm telling you, it's profitable although it's a long-term investment," he asserts.

Married with two children, Ndahayo lives in his own house. "I'm glad that I'm one of the people in this country who can add a brick on another," he laughs.

Ndahayo employs more than 10 people on a permanent basis. He is hoping to expand his business by venturing into green house agriculture and has now formed a company called Green Smart Farm.

And his advice for young aspiring entrepreneurs?

He mentions the Kinyarwanda proverb *ntiwakama inka utaragiye*, which loosely translates to "you can't milk a cow you've not fed". He explains that genuine success takes ambition, hard work and patience.

"Life is a battle and you must commit to win."


A worker packing flowers into a wheelbarrow

Photos supplied



Backpacks From The Sun And Bags From The Ocean

Salima Visram makes solar-powered backpacks for children in the rural depths of East Africa, funded by her $2 million-a-year online business selling eco-friendly handbags.

BY INAARA GANGJI

The quest started as the result of a random online search.

About three years ago, Salima Visram, founder of Soular, was looking for a simple handbag on the internet. She looked hard and wide, but could not find anything as minimalistic and elegant as she would've liked it. That's when she asked one of the factories manufacturing for Soular to make a bag based on designs she quickly drew up.

Over the next few months, she received hundreds of compliments on her custom-made bag and then decided to make a test batch to sell. That batch sold under the Samara brand, and the many that followed sold out every time. This is when she knew she had really tapped into something extraordinary, which could help move her social enterprise away from donor reliance.

"I wanted to create this ecosystem where you have a profitable business that is successful, that is generating enough revenue and profit to hopefully fund social causes," she says.

Soular, her social enterprise that makes solar-powered bags for children in East Africa, already had a one-for-one model in place in North America. For every solar-powered bag sold, one solar-powered bag

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“We really want to be at the forefront of materials innovation… being relentless in our search for better materials and for the world and for consumers.

would be donated to a child in Kenya, but it wasn't doing as well as planned. Visram hypothesizes this was likely because her consumers didn't always know the story behind the company, which was crucial to the brand.

Visram grew up near a tiny village on the outskirts of Mombasa, Kenya, where 22,000 people live below the poverty line. Many children are not able to do their homework every night because of a lack of access to electricity and they rely on kerosene lamps.

“It's something people rely on as their only source of light, and families living under a dollar a day spend 25% of their income on this,” she emphasizes. In her third year at McGill University in Canada, while studying for a degree in International Development, she decided to launch Soular to tackle this issue.

“So, whenever you told the Soular story, people would like to buy the bag, the one-for-one bag. But that was very hard to scale,” she adds.

Samara Bags was born in an effort to reach a North American audience more effectively. The company, which she now runs with her sister, Samara, is making $2 million in revenue a year, with over a 100,000 bags sold.

These bags were well-received by the market and when Visram thought about turning her test batch into a real business, she knew if she was a consumer, she would not want her bag to be made of real leather, and so, tapped into the vegan market.

But a lot of vegan leather is made from PVC, which is environmentally detrimental. And people are realizing that. Samara's factory in Kenya is now making its own materials, out of apples and even recycled ocean plastic. The brand is also set to launch a materials innovation lab in Nairobi soon.

“We really want to be at the forefront of materials innovation... being relentless in our search for better materials and for the world and for consumers.”

However, no company can be fully sustainable and Visram acknowledges that.

“I think sustainability is almost like a journey. It's not a destination. I don't think any company or any person can be fully sustainable just by being on this planet.”



Salima Visram

Photos supplied

Two and half years in and with a small team, Samara's lean model and bootstrapping has created an online business that has spent very little to create a popular, home-grown Canadian brand.

“So, for every purchase right now, we contribute 10% of our profits to Soular. Hopefully, by the end of this year, we're going to have 15,000 backpacks on the ground [in East Africa] and quite a few more,” she says.

Ten percent is not a lot, but it's what's sustainable for a company in growth mode, Visram admits.

But the brand is doing other things, like this past summer during the pandemic, they were donating meals in Kenya for every dollar spent on the site for three weeks, which got overwhelming support.

“And I think that for me was the epitome of why we started... I think there's so much power that brands have... So that made me really happy and I hope that things like that are just the start of the impact that we can make, and especially in Africa,” she exclaims.

Looking forward, she thinks social impact will always still be at the core of what she, Soular and Samara do. She imagines an intricate ecosystem that is employing people really well, is creating a value chain of supply that is lean and efficient and then channeling that into impact through Soular and other initiatives. All of this while ensuring that the community and her customers care and are aware.

But the one-for-one model for Soular might come back too, focusing on selling school bags to children and parents in North America who can relate to the story of their counterparts in Africa, matching the consumer need to Soular's purpose.

“Every company should have a social aspect to it and it is the responsibility of businesses to do the right thing and stand for the right thing... I think every company should operate like a social enterprise,” she says.



One-Man Show: Tyler Perry, shot at his studios in southern Atlanta, October 2019

The RISE and RISE of TYLER PERRY

From "poor as hell" to billionaire: how Tyler Perry built an entertainment empire and changed show business forever.

"DAMN, IT'S HOT OUT HERE," says Tyler Perry, who isn't making it easy on himself, clad in all black but for the shock of a white mask, as he directs a 12-person crew through a scene for the BET comedy *Sistas*. Last year, Perry might have avoided shooting in Atlanta's July sun, but in this coronavirus era, you take any window you can, and "Camp Quarantine" at his Tyler Perry Studios is trying to pioneer post-pandemic entertainment making.

"Get out of the car," he calls out to an actor in a cop car who walks over to a silver pickup driven by show regular Devale Ellis. Then he feeds Ellis his line —"What'd I do?" No one seems to have seen the script. When you're looking to get an entire season of primetime television in the can in 11 days — all before the rest of Hollywood has made it out of hiding — corners must be cut.

Away from the shoot, sitting alone on a metal folding chair in the center of a cavernous and empty soundstage, a container of Lysol wipes at his feet, Perry explains his method. "I mostly go on my gut and my instinct. I like to challenge the system and see what I can do differently."

That's an especially winning strategy in a system that feels stacked against you. Mostly dismissed by the Hollywood establishment and even some other Black luminaries (Spike Lee once derided Perry's crass slapstick approach as "coonery buffoonery" before later relenting), Perry has succeeded for two reasons: He has honed a product that too many others viewed as destined for the discount bin. And he made sure to control it all.

The 51-year-old entertainer owns the entirety of his creative output, including more than 1,200 episodes of television, 22 feature films and at least two dozen stage plays, as well as a 330-acre studio lot at the edge of Atlanta's southern limits. He used that control to leverage a deal with ViacomCBS that pays him $150 million a year

Photos by Ethan Pines for Forbes

for new content and gives him an equity stake in BET+, the streaming service it debuted last September. *Forbes* estimates Perry has earned more than $1.4 billion in pretax income since 2005, which he used to buy homes in Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles and Jackson Hole, Wyoming, as well as two planes. Quite a lifestyle for a once-homeless playwright raised in poverty in New Orleans. Today, Forbes estimates his net worth at $1 billion, with a clear path to future membership in The Forbes 400.

"I love when people say you come from 'humble beginnings,' " he says. "[It] means you were poor as hell." It also makes success sweeter. "Ownership," he adds, "changes everything."

RALLYING AROUND MADEA

A natural ham, Perry grew up making his mother laugh with impersonations. He was dealing with more than poverty: He describes an upbringing by an abusive man who he later learned was not his father. He was inspired to write out the stress he was feeling after watching an episode of Oprah Winfrey's talk show, and spent his 20s touring small theaters around the country performing the plays he wrote, produced and starred in — a crash course in what was to come.

"You got to understand, I had no mentors," Perry says. "My father doesn't know anything about business, and my uncles and mother, they know nothing about this. I didn't go to business school. Everything I've learned, I've learned in progress."

After dropping out of high school, he gained knowledge any way he could. In his early 20s, he worked at the Windsor Court Hotel in New Orleans, home to the annual National Association of Television Program Executives conference. The young Perry would use badges left behind in empty rooms to sneak into closed gatherings. One highlight: meeting game-show host Pat Sajak.

He began writing scripts while selling cars and serving as a bill collector. He eventually cobbled together $12,000, which he used to rent space at a community theater in Atlanta to produce a work he had drafted in his spare time.

The play, *I Know I've Been Changed*, was a story of child-abuse survivors. It was hardly an overnight success. At one point it wasn't generating enough money to enable him to pay his rent, and for three months, he lived out of his car on and off while he tweaked the production, working out the kinks until it started to garner some notice. He designed the set, made the programs and hung the lights; he even sold snacks during intermission.

"It took me I don't know how many days to finally get him convinced that the writer, director, does not do this," says Arthur Primas, Perry's promoter for more than two decades.

Perry toured relentlessly, slowly building a strong following among Black Americans, particularly the churchgoing set — older women like his mother, who had their burdens to bear and relished the chance to have someone give them a voice and, even better, a laugh. His iconic character, Madea, a straight-talking grandmother with a bad wig, a large stomach and even larger breasts, delivered her homespun moralism with brutally honest humor, becoming a must-see spectacle on the so-called "Chitlin Circuit," a loosely defined network of small theaters in Black communities nationwide. "I was aware of the traveling plays, but I never really took them seriously because... I considered myself a person who appreciates theater and Broadway," Winfrey says. "But I went to see one in Los Angeles, and I was not just moved by it, I was *changed* by it."

She invited Perry on her talk show in 2001, when he was in his early 30s. Onscreen they shared the requisite inspirational language of tenacity and renewal, but backstage they mined another seam altogether: money. Winfrey, who by then owned her show and Harpo, the company that produced it, offered Perry a secret, one he was already beginning to learn on his own: the importance of "writing your own checks" and being fully in control.

She became a friend, sounding board and, perhaps most importantly, a catalyst. Even before he made his first film or TV show, Perry hauled in more than $100 million from theater ticket sales, moved $20 million worth of merchandise and collected another $30 million selling videos of the performances.

It was time for him to go to Hollywood.

RETREAT TO ATLANTA

The introduction was made at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre, a 1,200-seat Italianate building opened in the 1920s, the dawn of Los Angeles' ascension as an entertainment capital. In 2001, Perry booked a three-night run of *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*, an event designed to bring out the kingmakers —producers, executives, lawyers and monied benefactors — who could make him a star. The show sold out, but the seats weren't filled with power brokers, just locals and some assistants sent to see what all the fuss was about.

"I couldn't walk down the street without people screaming, 'Madea, Tyler, Madea!' " Perry says, recalling his days on the road. "And then I got to Hollywood, and they had no clue. No clue to what I'd done, who I was or the following I had."

One of the assistants who had seen the show worked for Chuck Lorre, the acclaimed showrunner high on the success of hits *Grace Under Fire*, *Cybil*l and *Dharma & Greg*. After hearing about the play, he decided he'd try to pitch a sitcom built around Perry. The networks wouldn't bite, though, so Lorre moved on to *Two and a Half Men*, the Charlie Sheen show that became a breakout hit for CBS.

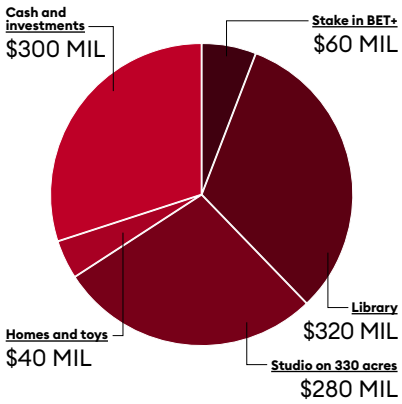
"There was about a 10-year period where everything went on a deep lull and there was nothing being made for people of color," Perry says. So he retreated to Atlanta, where he continued working on his stage plays and a film script. But he couldn't stop thinking about television.

> **"There was about a 10-year period where everything went on a deep lull and there was nothing being made for people of color.**

NOT FOR SALE

RUNNING THE NUMBERS:

MOST ENTERTAINERS NEVER GET A SHOT AT OWNERSHIP. FOR TYLER PERRY, IT WAS A STARTING POINT, WITH HOLLYWOOD'S RESISTANCE FUELING A BILLION-DOLLAR EMPIRE. HERE'S A BREAKDOWN OF HIS FORTUNE.



A recipe for syndication he remembered from sneaking into those sessions at the broadcasters' convention stuck with him: 100 episodes, a loyal audience and a willing distributor.

"The ignorance I had about Hollywood was so wonderful, looking back on it," he says.

He rented a warehouse behind a strip club in south Atlanta and turned it into a soundstage, investing in the tools of the trade he knew little about — lights, booms, mics, set decorations — and began shooting. He focused on scenes of a multigenerational Black family living together in Atlanta, the origins of his first sitcom.

A break came in 2006, when two struggling broadcast networks, UPN and WB, merged to create a new one called CW. The new network needed content, and Perry had it. He went back to Hollywood, this time armed with 10 full episodes of television shot, paid for and ready to air. CW bought it and aired it as *House of Payne*, which pulled in ratings wildly above expectations. Executives at the much larger TBS network took note. Before Perry had filmed another scene, he landed a guarantee that TBS would air at least 90 new episodes of his show that he would own outright. The network offered $200 million to get him away from CW, pure gold for such cheap productions — "primetime programming on a soap opera budget," as one top agent calls it — that spent nothing on writers, directors, producers or showrunners. Perry pocketed a huge haul: an estimated $138 million.

"It was so out of the box, such a different paradigm," says entertainment lawyer Dan Black, who says Perry's deal is still referenced in negotiations today. "You can get meaningful fees and meaningful back-end, but if you own the content, that's very, very impressive and not an easy thing to do."

Though he was clearly drawing huge crowds, the overwhelmingly white Hollywood executive set still didn't quite get it. Perry's attempt to rework *Diary* for film yielded little more than suggestions for rewrites and plot turns that would be more palatable for "mainstream" audiences.

" 'Black people who go to church don't go to the movies,' " Perry recalls one executive telling him at the time. "I came from a place where Black people had already embraced me and loved me. I was completely happy there, and still am."

So he forged opportunity out of others' ignorance. He made Lionsgate CEO Jon Feltheimer a proposal: He would put up half the money, collect half the profits and keep control of the content. The studio held the right to deduct all marketing costs from his cut, which Perry knew would be minimal, considering his following, as well as another 12.5% in distribution costs. The sweetener: Perry would eventually own it all outright.

" 'What do you want [*Diary*] to do?' " Perry recalls asking.

"Well, if it makes us $20 million I'll be very, very happy," Feltheimer replied, referring to its lifetime box-office haul.

"I said, 'OK, great — $20 million the first weekend?' "

Diary, which cost $5.5 million to make, grossed $51 million in theaters and has since brought in an additional $150 million in video rentals, ondemand viewing, DVD sales and TV licensing.

While most of Hollywood shrugged off the movie's success as a fluke, Perry and Lionsgate began pumping out *Madea* movies — 11 of them over 14 years, all made on speedy production schedules and minimal budgets. By the time Perry decided to retire the franchise in 2019, it had grossed more than $670 million at the box office and netted him about $290 million in fees and profits, *Forbes* estimates.

That's all now starting to come home, as those Lionsgate titles begin reverting to his control. With the help of financial adviser John Cary at Atlanta's NextGen Capital, Perry is starting to exploit the films more aggressively overseas, with early success in South Africa, South America and parts of Europe, all while continuing to self-finance hundreds of new TV episodes and at least one new feature film every year.

REVENGE ON REBEL SOIL

Poetically, Tyler Perry Studios, America's most prolific production venue for entertainment for

Black audiences, was once a Confederate military stronghold. Renamed Fort McPherson, the army base was used to house prisoners during the Spanish-American War and World War I. Its historic brick homes and structures have hosted luminaries including Franklin D. Roosevelt and Colin Powell, and its rutted 18-hole golf course, Perry says, once rivaled Augusta. The challenge for Perry, who once lived in a car he parked nearby, is to make it the setting for the denouement of his Horatio Alger narrative.

From the outside, it's a hard piece of real estate to be excited about, bordered on the north by a long stretch of barbed wire, to the east by a mile-long stretch of train tracks and to the south by the din of State Highway 154. It's sandwiched between two neighborhoods that have seen better days, with rows of middle-class houses, some spiffed up with bright landscaping, most with faded paint and chipped siding. More than a few are littered with old mattresses left to the elements.

Inside the gates, though, is a paradise no one enjoys more than Perry. During a visit last fall, he zipped around in a Polaris Ranger to the new soundstages he opened and christened with the names of showbiz



Trade Talk: Perry is known to shutter himself at his Wyoming hideout for six weeks, returning with three seasons' worth of TV. Here he gives notes to Kathy Bates for the 2008 film *The Family That Preys*.

legends including Oprah Winfrey, Spike Lee, Sidney Poitier and Denzel Washington. As he drove, he called out the highlights — a strip mall, a yacht, an empty soundstage, a house fronted by four façades — and then, after rumbling over the abandoned golf course, gestured toward his favorite new purchase: a replica White House.

"I own the lights. I own the sets," Perry says, before settling into a couch in his office on the top floor of a modern, renovated four-story structure he calls the Dream Building. "So that's where the difference is. Because I own everything, my returns are higher."

He paid $30 million for the property in 2015 and has since spent $250 million building a studio operation that's now more than twice the size of the storied Warner Bros. backlot in Burbank, California — all of it paid for with the cash he's brought in churning out movies and television programming for the past 15 years. The acquisition was a masterstroke, giving him a place to build a top-tier movie facility in a state that aggressively courts Hollywood productions, as well as a huge swath of land smack in the middle of one of Atlanta's red-hot economic Opportunity Zones.

"I love land the way some women love shoes," says Winfrey, one of the few people to see the property when Perry was considering making an offer. "I said 'If you don't take it, I will.' It was astounding to me. I am officially in awe."

In truth, it was a deal that perhaps only Perry could have made. He's been operating out of Atlanta since he released *Diary* in 2005; in the ensuing 15 years he has produced at least one feature film every year, as well as 13 more television series, nearly all of it filmed in and around the city.

When it came to the fading army base, Atlanta was in need of a development partner who might inspire commercial activity that could help revitalize the otherwise forgotten section of the city's southern edges. Perry had an in — not only via his rapport with President Obama, who at the time could have nixed any deal for the military land — but through his history of offering jobs to local crews.

His timing couldn't have been better. In 2008, the Georgia Film Office had piled on tax incentives for production companies, and Perry made his purchase amid the streaming revolution, which triggered an arms race for content that has spurred a boom in demand for soundstages.

Even during the pandemic, he's keeping it all humming. With Madea retired and an exclusive deal with Winfrey's OWN network expired, Perry set his sights last year on BET, which has been struggling for direction and has now practically built the BET+ streaming service around him. The network will pay Perry $150 million annually to produce a minimum of 90 episodes of new TV each year until 2025. BET, its streaming service — which hit a million subscribers in August — and other Viacom properties get exclusive rights to air those shows for five years, as well as the reruns of his *House of Payne*, *Meet the Browns* and *For Better or Worse*, plus some of his early stage work, which Cary is beginning to exploit. After that half-decade, the rights to all those BET-funded shows revert to Perry. The first two — *The Oval* and *Sistas* — became BET's two top-rated programs in their first seasons.

The best part? "I don't have a noncompete," Perry says, which means still more projects, such as *A Fall From Grace*, which debuted in January on Netflix to terrible reviews — and 26 million streams in its first week. He also plans to start financing productions from other Black creators whom Hollywood has overlooked.

Fueled by those Georgia tax breaks, meanwhile, others are on hand to soak up extra capacity as well. Perry has rented studio space to major productions including Walt Disney's *Black Panther*, the Will Smith sequel *Bad Boys for Life* and TV's *The Walking Dead*. Last year Disney, Warner Bros. and other major studios, as well as new entrants like Netflix, Amazon and Apple, spent a combined $100 billion on original content, according to Frank Patterson, CEO of Pinewood Atlanta Studios, a rival lot 20 miles to the south.

With his studio humming, Perry is taking a page from Disney and Universal for lot development, with plans to build restaurants, shops and an entertainment complex with a theater and a theme park-like experience. Think Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville, but with the feel of a downhome Southern kitchen. Perry admits that such a venture will take him outside of his comfort zone in terms of scope, control —and debt, since his business has always been, extraordinarily, a self-financed, all-cash operation. His plans also include housing for trafficked women and LGBTQ youth, and an academy to teach kids who grew up like he did the things he never learned — financial literacy, for one.

The risk, though, is worth it. "I can go outside and take this dirt and put it on my hands and know that there were Confederate soldiers here walking this land, plotting and planning everything they could to keep us Negroes in place," Perry says. "The very fact that I am here on this land, the very fact that hundreds of people — Black and brown people — come here to make a living, that is effecting change."

NOT FOR

HOW CAN WE PROTECT OUR PLANET FROM CRISES, EPIDEMICS AND DANGERS?



By Kamel Ghribi, Chairman of Gruppo San Donato MEA

The post-Corona world will not be the same as the pre-Corona world." This fact has been agreed by the majority of experts and analysts who deal with international economic, political and environmental issues. What we have come to realize is that in our changing world, threats can face us to hurt our physical state but, and beyond that, it was unimaginable that this virus would keep us prisoner in our own home.

Today we have a serious challenge being that millions suffer including millions of people who have barely access to clean water. Reality is that poverty, hunger, unemployment is taxing on the deterioration of health care services in many regions of the world, like countries in Africa, the Middle East and some areas of Asia and South America.

Reports by the United Nations and the World Food and Agriculture Organization indicate that after decades of steady decline, the number of people suffering from hunger, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment, is starting to rise again.

Today, more than 820 million people go to bed hungry, of whom some 135 million suffer from acute hunger due to man-made conflicts, climate change and largely mental depression. The Covid-19 pandemic could now double that number, placing an additional 130 million people at risk of suffering from acute hunger by the end of 2020, according to the World Food Program.

With more than a quarter of a billion people potentially on the brink of starvation, swift action is needed to provide food.

It is not just about environment there is an urgent need for a profound change in the global food and agriculture system. Increasing agricultural productivity and sustainable food production are crucial to help mitigate hunger risks.

Businessman and head of the GK Investment Holding Group, Kamal Ghribi, says, "Hunger is not the only thing that plagues the poor countries of the South. Poverty due to the absence of effective economic investments and widespread unemployment among the inhabitants of these countries, especially among the youth. Illegal immigration is the result of this. It requires intersecting and interlocking solutions because each problem in it has a relationship with the rest of the other problems. "

He added, "Illegal immigration, has become a permanent economic, humanitarian and security crisis for European countries, especially Italy. That is a cry for help."

Kamel Ghribi believes that creating health hubs in the hardship countries of the region Africa and Middle East is a way that can mitigate epidemics and further health risks.

The management of the Covid-19 epidemic has demonstrated the superiority of health systems in certain countries and how these play a fundamental role in the economic sector mainly in terms of accountability. Some governments have largely abandoned the responsibility of the health of their citizens in favor of supporting private sector companies. Some of these health systems have completely collapsed, and people are thrown into the street because there are no beds, equipment, and doctors for health care.

Kamel Ghribi spoke in 2020 at ECAM European Council on Africa Middle East held in Rome, which brought together health officialsof the Middle East and North Africa with Italian officials in collaboration with the San Donato Hospital Group.

It was agreed to strengthen cooperation between them in the field of combating the Covid-19 epidemic and to explore new solutions post pandemic to develop health services in Kenya, Tunisia, Iraq and others to serve their citizens.

The various bilateral meetings, highlighted health technologies, collaboration on joint projects for the development of the health sector and the transfer of knowledge for specialized services from the most developed countries. These meetings will continue remotely with the aim of Universal Health care, via the support of the San Donato Group.

Poverty eradication must go hand in hand with strategies that build economic growth.

A WHOLE OF SOCIETY APPROACH: WOMEN ARE KEY TO BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES BEYOND COVID-19

NOT FOR SALE

By Vanessa Moungar and Yero Baldeh

In Africa's fragile contexts, the burden of conflict, poverty and climate change falls most heavily on already marginalized groups. If we do not significantly and collectively step up our efforts, the continent's share of the world's poor will rise to over 90% by 2030, and 8 of the world's 10 poorest countries will be in Africa and in situations of fragility. We need to act decisively to reset this trajectory. Today, pockets of fragility are increasingly spreading within and across borders, exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak with its health and socio-economic consequences. The pandemic has disproportionately impacted women and girls living in fragile contexts with ripple effects on education, livelihoods and nutrition, among others.

However, women are the backbones of African economies and can be key drivers of transformation as we strive to build back better, more resilient societies. It is women, if empowered and provided with adequate support, who can help rebuild communities once the crisis has passed.

Studies demonstrate that in Africa, women reinvest up to 90% of their income in providing a social safety net for their families, with a positive impact on health, education, and nutrition. Investing in women generates higher development returns.

Challenges of Vulnerability and Fragility

Fragility and its manifestations are complex, multi-dimensional and evolving as a result of dramatic social, economic, political and environmental changes that exacerbate patterns of inequality, exclusion and marginalisation. Women have been for far too long – and are unfortunately too often still – confined to unpaid carework and low paying jobs, which results in unpredictable and inadequate sources of income and social protection.

The COVID-19 crisis has deepened these inequalities. A study carried out by ImpactHer and UN Women across 30 African countries in July 2020 revealed that 80% of female small- and medium-sized (SME) buisness owners had to temporarily or permanently shut down their businesses due to pandemic restrictions.

The effect of an economic retrenchment in women-led businesses is being felt across society as women-led busi-



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Yero Baldeh is Director of the Transition States Coordination Office at the African Development Bank

nesses account for about 40% of Africa's SMEs. This has resulted in reduced access to basic services, including food security, nutrition, health, education and housing, to mention a few, rising fragility pressures across the continent. At the same time, governments' fiscal space is narrowing, as a result of diminished economic activity and rising budgetary demands for social protection amid the pandemic. This leaves fewer resources for development finance.

Tapping the Potential of Women to Stimulate Resilience Building

Women are at the center of our economies and societies, and their access to more opportunity results in collateral benefits for all – and magnifies impact. If women are empowered and provided with adequate support, transformation to inclusive communities with shared prosperity and reduced poverty is possible on the African continent.

The African Development Bank remains on the frontline of the challenge to reach the continent's most vulnerable and to bolster resilient communities.

Specifically, the Bank is working with partners to address some of the root causes of fragility and vulnerability among women, youth and other marginalized groups such as forcibly displaced and hosting communities, through key strategic and operational policies. We do this through expanding analytics, knowledge work and tools that underpin our strategies, policies and operations across the African continent.

One example is the Bank's support for income-generating activities in the Sahel, in areas such as Timbuktu in Mali, Diffa and Agadez in Niger and Kishira in Chad, with the aim of breaking long-term cycles of crisis and vulnerability. While responsiveness and flexibility guide the Bank Group's approach to addressing fragility, more emphasis is to be given to early warning of risks, mitigation and prevention efforts.

Innovative Partnerships

While a lot of ground has been covered, many challenges still lie ahead. These should be addressed through an integrated approach across all sectors, for specific interventions to be identified, performance monitored and reported.

We need innovative partnerships that break the silos of development and humanitarian interventions along the peace-development-humanitarian nexus. We need to bring in the private sector and leverage our comparative advantages to have the desired impact at scale on the ground and break the cycle of poverty and fragility.

Some of the most effective ways to invest in the resilience of women, youth and vulnerable communities will be spotlighted from 11 to 12 November at the virtual Finance in Common (FiC) Summit (for example, but not limited to, High-Level Event 3 on Human Security in Fragile Settings: Scaling-Up Humanitarian and Resilience Investment and High-Level Event 7 on Development Banks as Actors for Change Towards Gender Equality). The Summit brings together 450 public development banks for the first time, with the aim of promoting new forms of investment to foster inclusive and sustainable growth. Join us online (https://financeincommon.org/).

The time has come to invest in women, harness their strength and resilience to build more prosperous communities.

Because where women succeed, everyone benefits.

What The Futurists Say

The five ways the Covid carnage can help create the entrepreneurs of the future.

BY CHANEL RETIEF



NOT FOR SALE

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS ALSO BROUGHT with it opportunities, and according to South Africa-based futurists Graeme Codrington and John Sanei, it's time to embrace the change and rather see it as a chance to try and rebuild your business, even if it is on the brink of falling apart.

1. "STOP WAITING FOR THINGS TO GO BACK TO NORMAL, IT'S NOT GOING TO"

Don't press the "huge pause button" on life.

Codrington, a futurist who tracks disruptions through history, states that the era of the coronavirus could be with us longer than we think.

"The disruption that Covid is causing is going to be with us, I think for at least two more years. Even in the best-case scenarios, Africa will only get a vaccine [in 2021]. And it will take a few months, maybe the whole year to produce it, distribute around the world and convince people to take it."

He adds that even once vaccines are made available, the level of comfort people felt previously doing 'normal' stuff every day will change.

"People are going to be nervous to fly, to travel, nervous to go out to restaurants to eat, nervous to go into public spaces. So you know, tourism, entertainment, hospitality is going to really struggle. In any scenario, you know, even the best scenario, you're going to be struggling.

"So what we've got to realize is this deep disruption going on here."

2. "UNDERSTAND SEAMLESSNESS AND YOU CAN BECOME VERY SUCCESSFUL"

Sanei, a futurist who categorizes and contextualizes the future through human instinct, believes that businesses need to find a more seamless way to give consumers what they want. It can be an average idea, but as long as it's something that could accommodate the consumers of today, who will likely not want to leave the confines of their home, you can be successful.

"The example I will use is Domino's Pizza," Sanei explains. "They may not have the most amazing pizza but they've understood seamlessness getting a pizza to you as quickly as possible because they have the Ten Second App."

The basis of understanding seamlessness is understanding what people want, especially during this time.

"And of course, that is going to differ depending on what industry you are in and depending on where you are, but this is where entrepreneurs can step up because the smaller your business is, the more local it is, the easier it is for you to make adjustments and shift and think 'what can I do for my clients, my customers, what else can I do for them'?" says Codrington.

3. "REINVENT"

It has been reiterated by economists that businesses may have to close their doors and millions of people will find themselves unemployed if they haven't already. However, futurists are certain that in situations like this, it's best to either reinvent your business model – or reinvent yourself.

"Any advice I give to entrepreneurs is based on this principle that they must look for a gap. Ask yourself the question 'what makes you most excited, and what can you bring to the world that's uniquely yours, what is uniquely, and authentically me?' And in that process, what we do is we add value to the world based on what we are here to do," Sanei says.

"This is what every entrepreneur does and knows every single day," Codrington adds. "If you add real value, and people see the value that you're adding, they'll buy from you. And so it obviously isn't that simple for everybody. Because it's tough. You know this is a tough economy. It's a tough situation. But whether it's tough or easy, that's the right mindset. 'What do people need, why should they buy it from me?' If you ask those two questions and find answers, you'll get through this."

4. "GO BACK TO BASICS"

Codrington believes that this would be a perfect time to re-educate yourself on the basic structures of running a business. However, this can only happen after you have accepted that your business has suffered during this time but there is light at the end of the tunnel.

"Because now you basically don't cry about what could have been any more, but you say 'what is and what exists now'. That's what I think distinguishes entrepreneurs from corporate people anyway. Because entrepreneurs get up every morning saying, 'I've got to make something happen today'," Codrington says.

It always comes back to what the consumer needs, and that is the main focus that gives the entrepreneur drive, Codrington says. He further adds that during this crisis, adapting your business model to suit the time is what could preserve your business in the long haul. A practical example is how some hotels around the world have turned their businesses into 'work from home' offices.

"So they are saying, 'you can't go into the office, but you don't want to be stuck at home, so why don't you rent a room in our hotel, we'll give you free bottomless coffee, we'll give you room service'. You're comfortable with the hotel. There's no bed, you're not sleeping at the hotel. You arrive in the morning. You go into a room, it'll be your room only," says Codrington.

5. "LEAVE THE OLD WORLD AND EMBRACE CHANGE"

Business models, such as supply and demand models, are not needed anymore. Having to expect people to walk into a shop and buy something is an old model that needs to be eradicated. Sanei further adds that because the world has "this thing called the internet", passion for your business is all that is necessary.

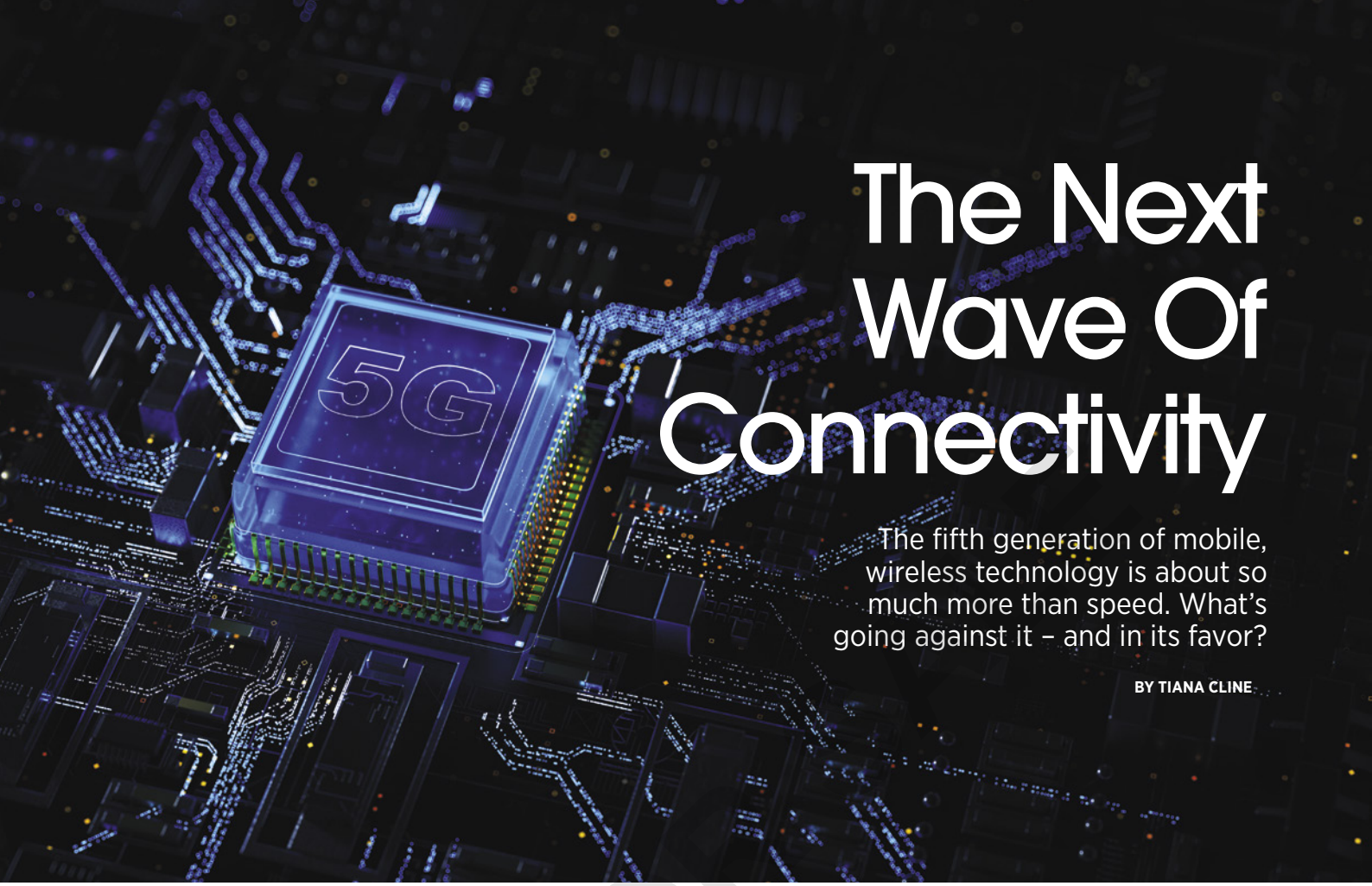
"If your business is taking strain, and your business is dying, and you are nervous about it, it means that you haven't understood a digital-first world. Which means that you haven't understood that the world we're going into has new rules attached. You need to understand that if your business is dying, the reason is because it's not really for this world," Sanai says.

As daunting as this time may be, endless opportunities await entrepreneurs. What guarantees your success during this time will be your behavior.

"And so the entrepreneurs of the future are the ones that understand that they are the machine, they are the business and that they are the ones who are going to be making things happen. Not the ones relying on a sector, or a subject or a technology, because you have no idea and cannot guarantee and hedge your bets on anything that's coming in the future," Sanei says.



Photos via Getty Images



The Next Wave Of Connectivity

The fifth generation of mobile, wireless technology is about so much more than speed. What's going against it – and in its favor?

BY TIANA CLINE

CELLPHONE TOWERS ARE EASY TO SPOT. EVEN when not camouflaged as trees, flags or church steeples, they're massive structures and what mobile networks use to provide high-speed, high-quality coverage. But when you find yourself in an area with terrible reception, or when your devices lose signal and switch from 4G to 3G, it's likely the network is congested. 5G, the fifth generation of wireless technology, is about to change that forever.

"What we are doing is we're using more of a particular natural phenomenon," explains Brett StClair, the CEO and co-founder of Teraflow.ai, a global data and machine learning engineering consultancy. "5G uses spectrum, or waves. It uses the same waves that we've been using since the sixties to deliver television on. It's very clean, it's very high capacity... and all we've been using it for is to send an image through!"

The microwave effect

The idea of 5G networks connecting cities and millions of devices together sounds revolutionary but it's also been met with trepidation. Protests have broken out around the world in a bid to stop 5G being rolled out, fearing that the next generation of mobile connectivity could have serious health ramifications and impact the environment negatively. Conspiracy theories circulating around 5G and the coronavirus pandemic saw activists in the United Kingdom burning down phone masts.

"With 5G, one of the things that comes about is that we have to make the waves go further than they normally can. One of the words that's used to describe that is radiation. There's a term called non-ionising, which means it's not generating enough energy to be harmful to anything, let alone a human being. The photon energy is so low that it can't harm anyone," explains SqwidNet's Managing Director, Phathizwe Malinga.

Research conducted by Christopher Collins, a professor of radiology at New York University, showed that unlike the electromagnetic waves used in X-rays, MRIs and ultrasounds, which are powerful enough to break chemical bonds apart (and cause serious damage), the waves used by 5G, Bluetooth and even Wi-Fi are weak.

They cannot even penetrate skin.

This also explains why 5G is very different – and possibly safer – than its predecessor. It may be the next generation of mobile connectivity but with 5G, we won't need more fake trees.

5G towers differ both physically and functionally. They're so small that they can be installed on light poles or even traffic lights.

But because 5G data is transmitting on an entirely different part of the radio spectrum to 4G, more of these 'mini towers' are needed to cover the same amount of space.

"Unfortunately to get those 5G speeds, you'll need a lot more of these towers. I'm imagining municipalities will hold off as long as possible," adds Malinga. "As we start moving into this space, a lot of the networks are starting to get better understanding that this is a multi-connectivity space. We need to start to create combination-use cases that will result in a better-looking city."

Vodacom was the first operator to launch a mobile and fixed 5G service in South Africa in May 2020 after launching Africa's first fixed

Photos supplied; Photo via Getty Images

NOT FOR

5G commercial service in Lesotho in 2018. The mobile operator's plan is to deploy 5G coverage throughout its African footprint over the next few years, provided it can access the necessary spectrum within each market.

"5G is also capable of supporting entirely new and advanced-use cases such as challenging enterprise applications that will improve their operational efficiency, sustainability, and/or health and safety," explains Vodacom's executive head of media relations, Byron Kennedy.

"Some examples of such applications include providing connectivity for remotely piloted vehicles in the mining and transportation sectors, industrial robots in the manufacturing sector and environmental monitoring within the energy and utilities sector."

Beyond the smartphone

While 5G technology can deliver higher data speeds and a massive network capacity with a greater number of connected devices, one of its biggest problems is range. "What it does from an impact point of view is it excludes a lot of the population. If you're not living in the city, 5G might not be a reality for you. But luckily, there is this good headway being made on the fibre side. So you can almost think of 5G and fibre being easily substitutable from a business point of view," adds Malinga.

Because 5G has the potential to increase how data is moved, it will enable a wide range of new business applications and use cases that go far beyond the smartphone. The industrial application of 5G, especially when it comes to the Internet of Things (IoT) and advancing AI, is often overlooked. By 2025, there will be 1.2 billion 5G connections worldwide according to the GSMA, a trade body of global mobile network operators.

"5G will change how we manage our compute loads," explains StClair, "no matter where you are in the world, what 5G enables you to do is bring machine learning and AI right to the edge of the network."



"What it does from an impact point of view is it excludes a lot of the population. If you're not living in the city, 5G might not be a reality for you.
– Phathizwe Malinga, SqwidNet's Managing Director



"We have so much data in the world. And with 5G, we're essentially going to multiply that by a factor of 1,000.
– Brett StClair, the CEO and co-founder of Teraflow.ai

When data is stored in the cloud, it most likely means that it is sitting in a server farm thousands of kilometers away. Big cloud players like Google, Facebook and Apple all have massive data centers in Scandinavian countries like Denmark and Sweden.

"Even though you have bigger bandwidth to your device, if the service is in America, you're still going to suffer from something called latency. Even if it's 300 milliseconds, in today's world, that's a lot of time lost and even billions of transactions," adds StClair. "We have so much data in the world. And with 5G, we're essentially going to multiply that by a factor of 1,000. That amount of data needs to be processed but we don't process it like we used to process data stored in a database. What we do now is we run machine learning models to be more predictive to certain situations. The power of 5G is the ability to deploy models closer to the end user."

Bringing technology closer using 5G means that we're able to connect things that are far away from a business but act as though they are a part of a business. That's why 5G is so much more than a simple step-up in network speeds, it's a game-changer when it comes to connectivity.

"In farming, you can connect your cattle... you can connect boreholes that are far away and know how much water is inside. In towns, you can connect vehicles or even water meters and start detecting, in real-time, leaks and stop water from spreading," says Malinga.

"Ultimately, we need a device or a sensor that we can attach to something that we care about. 5G and IoT are complimentary, necessary, but they don't do the same thing. If we introduce these technologies to the people who can afford [them], they can fix and address their quality of life themselves, and then ride that exponential curve to a point where they start becoming small businesses that become large businesses that eventually become global players."



CONDUCTING INSPIRATION

Only 27, Ofentse Pitse owns and conducts an orchestra in South Africa, rewriting the soundtrack for the region's abundant though overlooked musical talent. But the pandemic has made performing together a logistical conundrum.

BY ALASTAIR HAGGER

NOT FOR SALE

IF IT REQUIRES 10,000 HOURS OF dedication to master an instrument, it takes someone of harmonic resolve to become the conductor of a 45-piece orchestra, and 30-member choir, by the age of 27. Ofentse Pitse is the owner of Anchored Sound, the Johannesburg-based, all-black phenomenon rewriting aspiration's soundtrack for the region's abundant but overlooked musical talent.

The first black South African woman to own and conduct an orchestra was playing the flugel horn, a gift from an uncle, by the age of 12 (her grandfather was the trumpeter and jazz conductor Otto Pitse); her nascent talent and determination were nurtured by the Salvation Army band in her home town of Mabopane, Pretoria, the capital of South Africa.

"In the beginning, the dream was a silent dream," she says. "I didn't really share my ideas, I was just thinking of how far I wanted to go. I didn't see enough representation in the brass band at church. I thought to myself, 'hang on, I've not seen enough girls'! That was a leadership step."

A formative experience at school then sparked a natural instinct for transgressive innovation.

"I remember one day just wanting to touch the piano in the music department," she says. "And being told, 'no, you can't touch the piano'. That made me feel so small. My argument will always be that you have to be what you want to see; you cannot fight a system if you are not willing to challenge it yourself."

Out of this frustration, Anchored Sound was born, named after the Biblical metaphor of hope as the anchor of the soul. The choir and orchestra, supported by Pitse, with

funds from her own architectural practice, perform everything from Sibelius to Vivaldi to Dvořák, with Pitse's leadership in turn bolstered by mentorship from the University of Pretoria Symphony Orchestra conductor, Gerben Grooten.

"I told him that if we need to do the very hard pieces, we are going to do the very hard pieces," she says. "So we do. It's always a challenge, every single week. He always emphasizes the leadership required. How you stand, or how you enter a rehearsal space, influences how you are treated. Because being a woman, sometimes when they see me enter the space they think, 'ah, what does she know'!"

The obstacles she faces are financial as well as cultural; funding is scarce and difficult to obtain. "Sometimes people see your pictures and you look like money, they hear interviews, you sound like money," she says. "But there's not one single person investing in Anchored Sound, the brand, or myself as a conductor. It's challenging to keep the ship afloat. I learned early on that if you want something to happen, you cannot wait for the government, or whatever, because then I would complain for years without having anything done."

Central to her role is her support for her members, many of whom lack the resources to purchase their own instruments or fulfil their own ambitions alone.

"I empower my members by first of all being a great – or at least a good enough! – example," she says. "So beyond just the musicianship, I always encourage them to study, even if it's not music. Education is the tool for opening up many doors mentally, not just in terms of opportunities. In the beginning, I would help them with their registration at school, with their tuition, with their accommodation. Whenever we book concerts, the funds go straight into their education. Most of them are very talented, but they come from homes that are disenfranchized."

The pandemic has also made rehearsing and performing together a logistical conundrum that is difficult to solve for members from disadvantaged communities.

"Technology doesn't come as second nature to some of us, so it has been difficult to facilitate how we go digital," she says. "All the major orchestras have the infrastructure to have your good cameras, your good clip-on mics. For us, it's very challenging, because you have players in remote areas, some in very small houses. If you ask them to record using their phone, you find in the other room there's a baby sister making noise. So I've been looking at new ways of thinking as conductors, because we are so used to meeting up in spaces that are enclosed; how do we live with this new norm? How do we create a new world symphony?"

> **"How do we live with this new norm? How do we create a new world symphony?**

For Pitse, the unexplored musical frontier that emerges after the pandemic will be unapologetically, dynamically African.

"My second dream is to create an African orchestra, with African instruments like the *marimba* and the *balafon* (gourd-resonated xylophone)," she says. "Most musicians who play African instruments don't know how to read music, so it would be such a spiritual exchange. These musicians know how to be guided by the spirit of music. And that's the beauty of all things African – it really is the spirit! I'm eagerly excited to make that happen in the near future, to find out how the spirit of Africa can come alive within this new world of what an orchestra can be."



Photo by Media24; Photo by Hymie Sokupha

A Mirror With Memory?

Our tech guru rounds up the coolest tools for 2021 and beyond.

BY NAFISA AKABOR







1. LIFESMART MAGIC MIRROR

The Magic Mirror merges fashion with technology. It can be mounted at a central location like the entrance to the home, the bedroom or the bathroom. It has smart features that let you control supported home appliances, similar to a smart speaker. It features an auto-wake up function, health management, voice control, entertainment functions and has a built-in camera. The Magic Mirror is Android-powered and runs on a MediaTek chip with 2GB of RAM and 16GB of memory. You simply scan a QR code to set up and select personal preferences. **R29,995 ($1,915) from Mikrotech.co.za.**

2. SAMSUNG GALAXY Z FOLD 2

The Samsung Galaxy Z Fold 2 is the gadget to own for early adopters. Samsung's newest folding screen device is an incredible piece of tech, boasting an ultra-thin glass top over last year's plastic one. The Infinity-O display, 120Hz refresh rate and multi-tasking capabilities make it a pleasure to use. Add to it a triple lens camera, 5G support, a massive fast-charging battery and what more could you want? If this is the future of mobile, we're excited. **R46,995 ($3,000) from Samsung stores.**

3. IPAD AIR (64GB CELLULAR)

The new iPad Air takes Work From Anywhere to another level. Weighing just under 500g, it runs on Apple's fastest A14 Bionic chip and is more powerful than most PCs. Plus, the pencil and keyboard accessories give you flexibility on what you can do or how creative you get to be. It has a 10.9-inch display, narrow bezels and 12MP camera; ideally suited for today's environment as a result of the global pandemic. Work or play, it has an excellent battery life. This sleek tablet now comes in pastel hues like blue, green and pink, in addition to silver and grey. **R14,999 ($958) at the iStore.**

NOT FOR SALE

4. RING VIDEO DOORBELL 3

Amazon's popular Ring Video Doorbell 3 is now available in South Africa for the first time. For added peace of mind, it has motion detection and live view, above its two-way talk system. It features a 1080p full HD camera, enhanced dual-band 2.4-5Ghz WiFi connectivity and Alexa support. It works with the user-friendly Ring app, accessible from a mobile device. The adjustable Near Zone feature detects motion within 1.5m to 4.5m from the front door. Privacy features support areas that can be excluded from the camera's field of view and the ability to turn off video or audio recording.
R3,999 ($255) from Takealot.com

5. SMEG D&G ESPRESSO MACHINE

The Smeg Dolce & Gabanna manual espresso machine is for serious coffee-lovers who also appreciate a touch of luxury. This retro statement piece with its Sicilian-inspired geometric pattern deserves a special spot in the kitchen. It has a removable 1L tank, adjustable coffee temperature and supports three cup sizes (Ristretto, Espresso and Lungi) with a milk froth function. Other features include an anti-drip system, descaling indicator and adjustable stand-by times between nine minutes to three hours. The 1350W espresso machine is made in Italy.
R24,699 ($1,576) from Yuppiechef.com.

6. JEKYLL & HIDE MONTANA BACKPACK

The Montana overnight business backpack from Jekyll & Hide is stylish and durable, made from full-grain leather available in a beautiful colt shade. The layout is organised with compartments for a laptop, tablet, travel documents, business cards, cables, pens, etc. Its dimensions are 31 x 15 x 45cm and has secure fastening straps; a front zipped pocket; and a secure RFID slot to protect bank cards and passports from identity theft. The main zipped pocket has a dedicated 15" laptop and tablet slots. As an overnighter, the middle compartment accommodates a change of clothes or shoes.
R6,999 ($447) at JekyllandHide.co.za.

7. UNDER ARMOUR HOVR MACHINA

If lockdown had you turn to fitness, check out Under Armour's Hovr Machina running shoes. The Bluetooth-powered sneaker connects to a smartphone app to provide stats like step count, cadence, stride length, foot strike angle, etc. It also acts as a real-time running coach with personalized guidance, and how to better manage risk of injury while improving performance. The Hovr Machina provides a 'zero gravity feel' through its responsive carbon-plated propulsion soles and have the right amount of cushioning. It's comfortable to wear when not training and suitable for marathon and long distances. Available in sizes for men and women in various shades.
R2,999 ($191) at UnderArmour.co.za.

8. SONY PLAYSTATION 5

Sony's much-anticipated next-generation gaming console has landed in time for the holiday season. The PlayStation 5's futuristic design has gained a lot of attention since its reveal but given the uptake in gaming during lockdown globally, it's a no-brainer. There will be two variants available, one with an optical drive and one without. The PS5 supports graphics up to 4K, a high-speed 825GB SSD, and 3D audio on its wireless controller. Exclusive titles at launch include Marvel's Spider-Man: Miles Morales, Sackboy A Big Adventure, and Horizon Forbidden West. **Digital Edition: R9,999 ($638) and Blu-Ray: R11,999 ($766) via Raru.co.za.**

Dollar prices are approximates as per the exchange rate at the time of going to press.





Photos supplied

THE LUXE FACTOR



Lungile Radu (South African media personality)
Printed suit
R6,500 ($422,10);
Imprint ZA

Kefilwe Mabote (A digital creator and luxury lifestyle enthusiast in South Africa)
Blue and black printed lounge wear and Corset belt ; both designed by Gert-Johan Coetzee
(Price on request)

THE HIGH-END LUXURY MARKET HAS NO DOUBT TAKEN A BACK SEAT DURING THE PANDEMIC, BUT FINE AESTHETICS CAN TRAVEL ACROSS TIME, SPACE AND BOUNDARIES. HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TO REVISIT OPULENCE AND LUXURY OVER THE HOLIDAY SEASON IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR HOME.

COMPILED BY: BONTLEFEELA MOGOYE
PHOTOGRAPHY: MOTLABANA MONNAKGOTLA
ART DIRECTION: LUCY NKOSI



Black tuxedo jacket **R2,800 ($181,83)**, Black pants **R1,050 ($68,19)** and Shirt **R695 ($45,13)**, all Carducci
Slip-on shoes **R3,500 ($227,29)**- Relevance for Men from Africa Rise, Sandton, Johannesburg



Black two-piece: Pants **R7,437 ($482,95)** Top **R8,437 ($547,89)** all Taibo Bacar
Cars supplied by: Zebra Square Gallery Hyde Park
Furniture by Ligne Roset **(www.lignerosetsa.co.za)**



Nguni Cow Suit **R6,800 ($441,58)** By Imprint Za

“Over the years, I’ve invested in a few beautifully designed and custom-fitted suits that have stood the test of time. These are significant purchases that I can still appreciate the value of.
– Lungile Radu

ON THE MONEY

Looking for luxury fashion buys for him? This page could offer some nifty ideas for the festive season.

COMPILED BY: BONTLEFEELA BAILE MOGOYE



BALMAIN ZARDOZI EMBROIDERED WOOL BARATHEA TUXEDO JACKET, **R60,100 ($3,911)**

YSL MONOGRAM SUEDE BELT, **R5,465 ($355)**

BACCARAT-ROUGE 540, 200ML, **R7,685 ($500)**, SKINS COSMETICS

VELVET GANCINI LOAFERS, SALVATORE FERRAGAMO **(Price on request)**

TOM FORD SUNGLASSES, **R6,590 ($429)**; SUNGLASS HUT

IPHONE 11 PRO MAX BUMPER, LOUIS VUITTON **(Price on request)**

THODD TROUSER, TIGER OF SWEDEN **(Price on request)**

STOCKISTS:

Cartier www.cartier.com •**Carol Bouwer** carol-bouwer-bags.myshopify.com •**Louis Vuitton** www.louisvuitton.com •**Matches Fashion** www.matchesfashion.com •**Salvatore Ferragamo** www.ferragamo.com •**Skins Cosmetics** www.skins.co.za •**Sunglass Hut** www.sunglasshut.com •**Tiger Of Sweden** www.tigerofsweden.com •**Woolworths** www.woolworths.co.za

Dollar prices are approximate figures as per the exchange rate at the time of going to press.



“...I have noted that luxury is something one needs to do for oneself. Whether I shop online or in-store, the experience is the same.
– Kefilwe Mabote

Alex lime green dress
R18,000 ($1168,90)
Taibo Bacar

AT ANY COST

Looking for delectable opulence for her? This spread could offer some pretty neat ideas.

COMPILED BY: BONTLEFEELA BAILE MOGOYE



KEDI, **R15,000 ($977)** CAROL BOUWER BAGS



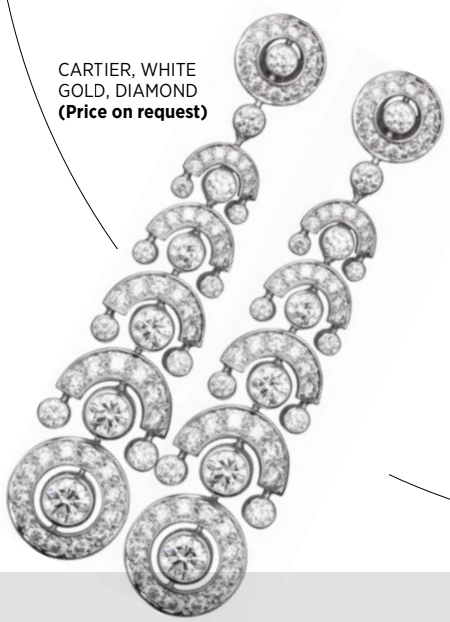
BOW TRIM WOOL BLEND CANDY MINI DRESS, **R42,585 ($2,773)**, VALENTINO



CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN DEGRATISSIMO 130 RAINBOW, SUEDE SANDALS, **R15,125 ($985)**



GRADIENT BLACK SUNGLASSES, VALENTINO, **R3,480 ($226)**, SUNGLASS HUT



CARTIER, WHITE GOLD, DIAMOND **(Price on request)**



CHANEL NO.5, **R1,950 ($127)**, WOOLWORTHS



SINGLE BREASTED CHIFFON WAIST WOOL BLEND JACKET, **R32,325 ($2,105)** BURBERRY

STOCKISTS:

Cartier www.cartier.com •**Carol Bouwer** carol-bouwer-bags.myshopify.com •**Louis Vuitton** www.louisvuitton.com •**Matches Fashion** www.matchesfashion.com •**Salvatore Ferragamo** www.ferragamo.com •**Skins Cosmetics** www.skins.co.za •**Sunglass Hut** www.sunglasshut.com •**Tiger Of Sweden** www.tigerofsweden.com •**Woolworths** www.woolworths.co.za

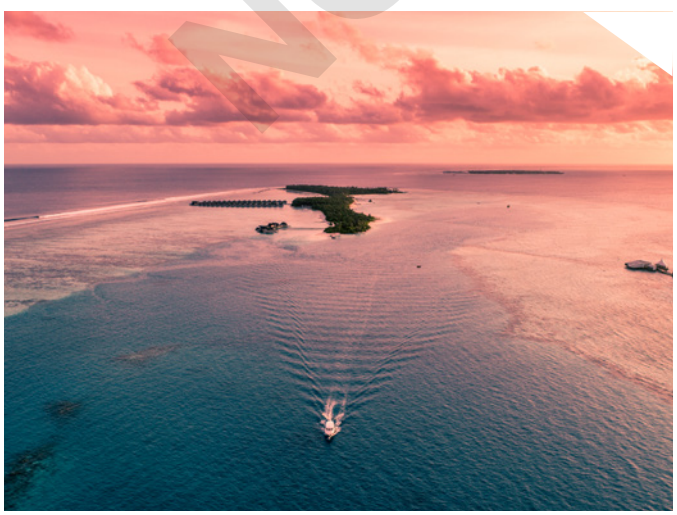
Dollar prices are approximate figures as per the exchange rate at the time of going to press.

ISLAND IDYLL

The great escape that is the Maldives, with its one-island-one-resort concept, practises natural distancing.

MALDIVES IS WHAT DREAMS ARE MADE OF – A destination that inspires impossibly breath-taking pictures. The unique geography of scattered islands practises natural distancing, which makes it a safe haven for all travelers. The one-island-one-resort concept means that there is only one hotel on each island, offering the isolation and privacy you deserve. It's the perfect island getaway if you are looking for time and space in isolation, also soaking up the luxury and safety it affords.

https://visitmaldives.com/en





NOT FOR



5 Surprising Ways Your Printer Wastes Your Money!

written by printulu

You could be losing money. Big time.

In this guide, we are going to cover the 5 things that you need to look out for the next time you visit the printers. If you are a print reseller, being knowledgeable about money wasters could save you and your clients quite a few bucks.

1. Waiting days to get your quotes? Do this instead.

When you request a quote from the printer it may take days, or even weeks, depending on how swamped the quote estimator is. We all know that time is money. If you are waiting for a quote for more than 48hrs to send to your client, it reduces the likelihood that you'll get the sale.

Your competitor might have supplied a quote on the same day and it's alarming to know that you could be losing clients because of an inefficient quoting process.

The reasons there are time delays:

Most small printers don't have the resources to hire a lot of staff who will just be in charge of print estimating. This means that your quote request will be dealt with depending on how many quotes the often only one estimator still has to cover until they get to yours.

Their prioritisation model is flawed in the sense that corporate or high-value quotes get preference over smaller quotes.

The quoting process is often not optimized. There is no set checklist in place to indicate what is required for a quote to be fulfilled and in most cases, there will be a back and forth of explaining your requirements over the phone. This leaves a whole lot of room for big mistakes that could cost you not only time, but also money due to misunderstandings.

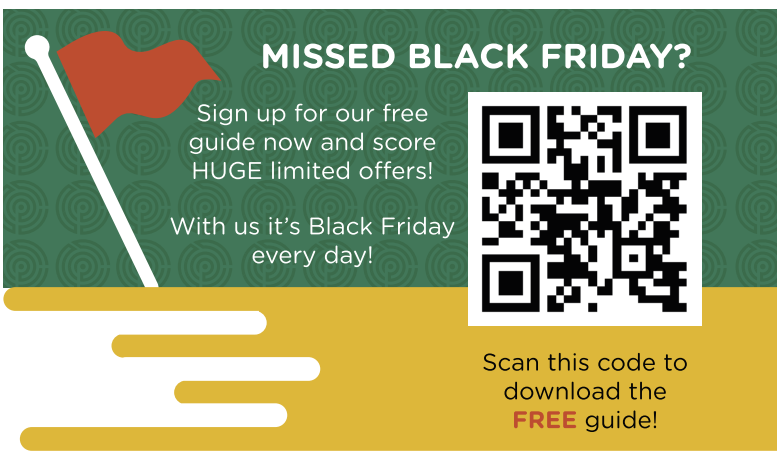
This will usually land you into a deep sea of frustrations because you constantly have to follow up on the quotes. If you sent multiple quote requests, it gets even worse. You have to free up more time in your busy day to follow up on these various quotes.

Are you sick of waiting for your quotes? Then Printulu might be an option. Printulu has created a fast and transparent system for everyone to get quotes. 90% of our quote requests are done instantly online and you can get a PDF copy directly from the website.

There is no preferential treatment when it comes to pricing and custom quotes are handled with a first in first out prioritisation system. Any quotes that cannot be done online are usually done within 24 hours.

"This leaves a whole lot of room for big mistakes that could cost you."

Wait... is that it? No, it isn't. This is only one out of FIVE things that your printer is using to avoid giving you the best price you could possibly have. Download this free guide to find out what else you could be doing to save money on your prints. If you sign up now you will score our amazing BLACK FRIDAY deal!





The State Of Play

Sports tours and tournaments remain cancelled, and those which do go ahead play in empty stadiums without fans. For South Africa's tourism sector this year, it has been a losing game.

BY NICK SAID

AS THE SUN BEAT DOWN ON THEIR REDDENING skin, the thousands of England fans packed into Newlands Cricket Ground broke into song.

"We get R18 to the Pound, R18 to the Pound!" they bellowed, taunting the home faithful as the beer flowed and the lips loosened.

The Newlands New Year test is one of the great experiences in South African sport, and is comfortably the most well-supported five-day fixture in the country.

World-class cricketers and a stunning backdrop are not all that attract fans – particularly from overseas – but also a chance to experience all of the varied delights of the Mother City, Cape Town, at a much more palatable cost than many of the world's other leading destinations.

The slip in the Rand is bad news for locals, who have seen their cost of living spike, but for visitors to the country, particularly sports fans, it is an added sweetener when you can enjoy outstanding food, many drinks and a heady night on the town for what you may pay for a mediocre pub meal and a taxi fare in London.

According to South African Tourism's official report for 2019, the sector added R125 billion ($8 billion) in spend to South Africa's coffers, with R81.2 billion ($5.2 billion) of that from international visitors. They stayed on average 11.4 days in the country for a total of 112 million bed nights.

There were 10.2 million international arrivals into the country in 2019, most from the rest of Africa, but around R2.6 million of those from outside of the continent.

It has been steady year-on-year growth, but it is now obvious that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has hit tourism hard

NOT FOR SALE



the lack of spectators at sports events.

"A game of soccer lasts 90 minutes, but it is what happens around that game that is important to us," SA Tourism CEO Sisa Ntshona tells FORBES AFRICA in a sobering assessment of the state of play.

"We have seen the PSL [local Premier Soccer League] is back up and running here in South Africa, but because crowds are not yet allowed in stadiums, we are not seeing the movement of fans to different cities.

"For example, for big matches, there would be a large number of fans who would travel from Johannesburg to Durban. That alone provides a sizeable boost to the local tourism sector."

For a cup final outside of Gauteng involving Soweto giants Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates, you may find 30,000-40,000 people will travel to Durban, Polokwane, Nelspruit or even as far as Port Elizabeth within South African provinces.

It is these types of events that, as well as international cricket and rugby tours, that drive the sports tourism market, along with recreational golf, and schools and university events, all of which are on hold.

"There is not the budget any longer for the so-called big-ticket events like the Soccer World Cup and the Olympics, so our challenge is how to fill the calendar with smaller events, but lots of them," Ntshona admits.

But there are green shoots amid the gloom. What South



"There is no budget any longer for the so-called big-ticket events like the Soccer World Cup and the Olympics, so our challenge is how to fill the calendar with smaller events, but lots of them.

across all sectors, especially the sports environment with tours and tournaments cancelled, and those which do go ahead played in empty stadiums without fans.

Teams might bemoan the lost gate revenue and match-day income from merchandise and catering sales, but the economic impact runs much deeper than that.

Empty hotels and restaurants around the venues that would usually be brimming with guests, other tourist attractions that enjoy a place on a sports travelers' itinerary, shops and even taxi drivers all suffer from

Photos via Getty Images

Africa in particular does have is a world in one country, such a vast and varied variety of options that make it appealing.

Because with sports tourism, according to Ntshona, where the events are held is of vital significance.

"The destination is very important. If someone is invited to a golf tour, they will check where it is first. They want to know the destination is part of the experience, because the playing of the sport, or the match you are watching, is only part of it.

"For example, if someone is coming to Cape Town to run a marathon, we want them to bring the whole family, because that is when we see the true benefit from a tourism perspective.

"So it is about creating that 'destination' which will make people want to do that, and in South Africa, we have a lot to offer.

"You could start on the Highveld, go to Durban, on to Bloemfontein and Kimberley, and finally Cape Town, and all of those experiences will be different and have something unique to offer."

SA Tourism has 12 offices around the world that actively market the country, including from a sports perspective.

The Cape Town marathon is a prime example of what they are trying to achieve across many similar events, where they lobby organizers for precious entrance forms to be able to draw runners from all over the world.

The theory is those taking part will largely not come on their own, and just for the race, but rather bring their family to make a holiday out of it.

So 1,000 entrance forms to the Cape Town marathon could turn into at least 4,000 visitors.

With domestic travel, car hire, accommodation and attending attractions and events, or just shopping and eating out, that could easily result in an average spend of R4,000 ($257) per day.

And if those visitors stayed on average the 12 days that is the statistical norm, that turns into a tourism spend of almost R50 million ($3.2 million) from the single event.

But the reality is this is a market that has been decimated by Covid-19, with a global recession on the horizon and fears around travel, which is now both expensive and comes with potentially greater risk of infection.

The next big test for South Africa is the British & Irish Lions series in July-August 2021, where some 30,000 fans, at a minimum, are expected to travel from the United Kingdom and other parts of the world.

The tour itself is five weeks, and while most fans will come for part of it, likely the last two weeks that feature the test matches against the world champion Springboks, it is a potentially huge money-spinner for South African Rugby and Brand South Africa.

But with a second wave of Covid-19 having hit Europe and the potential for one in South Africa during the build-up to the winter months, whether fans will be able to travel, or will come en masse, remains to be seen.

"The Lions tour will go ahead, it is just in what form it takes, from full stadiums to the prospect of restrictions on the number of people in the stadiums. That is something that we cannot say. The situation is very fluid," Ntshona says.



"A game of soccer lasts 90 minutes, but it is what happens around that game that is important to us.
– SA Tourism CEO Sisa Ntshona

"We have learned a lot already through the Cocid-19 pandemic. And we continue to learn by monitoring the situation in Europe. They have shown us what to do, and maybe what not to do ..."

President Cyril Ramaphosa has told the South African tourism sector that he would like to see 21 million annual international arrivals in the country by 2030, a tall order that would mean a doubling of the current number.

Sports tours, either to watch a favorite team or to take part as a competitor, will have to play a big role in reaching that number, and will be a major focus for SA Tourism once the global picture around Covid-19 clears.

But just hosting sports events in the country and beaming them around the world can build confidence among an overseas audience.

For now, that will have to be the major focus.

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RWANDA'S TOP 5 DESTINATIONS

VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

Two and a half hours north of Kigali you will find Volcanoes National Park, home to most of the world's remaining mountain gorillas. Rwanda is among only three countries in the world where you can trek to see the majestic gorillas up close – a truly once in a lifetime experience.

LAKE KIVU

Kivu is one of Africa's Great Lakes, with deep emerald-green waters and a shoreline of magnificent mountains and fishing villages. The lake is dotted with uninhabited islands that can be explored by boat and provide the perfect location to relax and enjoy the peace of Rwanda's countryside.

NYUNGWE NATIONAL PARK

Nyungwe is one of the oldest rainforests found anywhere on the continent. The lush, green forest is home to over 300 bird species and 13 primate species including chimpanzees and colobus monkeys. Take a stroll through the canopy along a 70m high walkway for exhilarating views of the rainforest.

AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK

Rwanda's largest national park is home to a diverse array of plant and animal life. The lakes, papyrus swamps, savannah plains and rolling highlands make Akagera an incredibly scenic reserve. The park is home to the elusive Shoebill stork, seven newly introduced lions, elephant, leopard and the shy but stunning roan antelope.

KIGALI

Rwanda's capital provides the perfect backdrop for a weekend getaway. As one of the safest cities in Africa, Kigali is quickly becoming a favourite for East African and international tourists. Savour the tastes of international cuisine at the city's best restaurants and enjoy live music at the many clubs and bars in Kigali.



BY TSHILIDZI MARWALA

The writer is the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg, and author of the book: Closing the Gap: The Fourth Industrial Revolution in Africa.

Using AI and OR During The Covid-19 Pandemic

IN OCTOBER 2020, IT emerged that artificial intelligence (AI) was being used by crop researchers to breed crops for the changing climate. This is logical when you consider the significant time it takes to breed crops. A breeder examines which specific plants in a species are most resistant to weather phenomena such as drought and then crosses these plants to produce the best offspring. This process is repeated continuously over seven years until the most optimal variant is achieved.

With a growing global population and climate change taking hold, crop breeders do not have the time to keep up with the demand. Using AI techniques, the crop breeders can rapidly assess which plants grow the fastest in a particular climate or produce an optimum combination of genes, given the context. Simply put, this is Operations Research (OR) and AI in effect. As Sun Tzu put it in *The Art of War*, arguably the personification of OR: "Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win."

In October 2020, I addressed the Operations Research Society of South Africa. OR is a discipline that looks into solving a problem by defining the objective and then using optimization algorithms to predict the best path. It is used extensively in logistics, supply chain, scheduling of complex problems, and manufacturing. Considering that the goal of OR is to make rational decisions, and the objective of AI is to make human-like decisions, there is room for collaboration between these two disciplines. As Donald Brown wrote in the 1990 book *Operations Research and Artificial Intelligence:* "Researchers in operations research and artificial intelligence have traditionally remained separate in their activities. Recently, there has been an explosion of work at the border of the two fields, as members of both communities seek to leverage their activities and resolve problems that remain intractable to pure operations research or artificial intelligence techniques."

While we may not have named it, OR has been used extensively during the Covid-19 pandemic. It has been intriguing to observe different scientists using data to inform decision-making, which are quite varied. Even as they were being revised, these statistics determined the public health response, given the pandemic's very live nature. For instance, the promotion of Personal Protective Equipment, masks, and limiting gatherings was driven by decision-making using OR. In May 2020, Pandata released a report using OR to quantify years of lost life in South Africa due to Covid-19.

In 1986, the spacecraft, Challenger, broke apart 73 seconds after its launch from Cape Canaveral, crashing into the Atlantic Ocean from some 50,000 feet altitude. All seven astronauts aboard were killed, including a high school teacher selected to join the mission. In the aftermath, an investigation found that NASA had known that freezing temperatures could result in damage to the spacecraft's rubber O-rings, which separated its rocket boosters and prevented fuel leaks. However, NASA decided to go ahead with the launch anyway. The fragmentation of datasets and the willful ignoring of a specific dataset, which included the reaction of parts of the Challenger to climatic conditions, is an example, which resulted in tragic consequences.

Imagine if NASA had used AI and OR in the process. Perhaps, there could have been an alternative for the extreme cold temperatures. Maybe, the Challenger could have had a successful mission, and maybe the words, "Flight controllers here are looking very carefully at the situation... a major malfunction," would never have been uttered.

Given that for us to industrialize and grow our economy, there are crucial questions that we ought to ask as African universities. Do we have expertise in OR in our universities? Are many students majoring in OR? What research is happening at our universities in this important area? Are we in the game, in the emerging area of the convergence between AI and OR? The answers to these questions are negative. The African Union Commission on Human Resources, Science, and Technology must develop a strategy to answer these questions so that we can prepare the necessary human capacity that will ensure that we meet Agenda 2063.

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The Voice In The War Room

The first female Nigerian officer in the Israel Defense Forces, 28-year-old Tobi Lovv is keeping the Africa connection alive.

BY PAULA SLIER

IT'S NOT EVERY NIGERIAN SCHOOLGIRL'S DREAM TO grow up and serve in the army, least of all one that is thousands of kilometers away from home. But for as long as she can remember, this has been Tobi Lovv's driving ambition.

Born in Abuja, Nigeria, to a Christian mother and Israeli father, Lovv grew up on stories about her father's time in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). He was in a tank unit during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. "He'd talk about the friends he made, the experiences he had. He said 'I'm not going to ask anything of you – just do the army'," says Lovv.

And so no sooner had she finished high school at the age of 16, than the young self-described 'unofficial ambassador of Africa to Israel' was replacing her school dress with the olive green uniform of the Israeli army. "We grew up coming to Israel for the holidays, to see my grandmother and cousins who lived there. I always knew I had a two-sided identity."



In the last few years, that identity has become a strong part of her life.

"When I'm in Israel, I'm usually put in the Ethiopian box and in Nigeria, the half-caste. So I decided to take back my power and say 'I am a strong woman, I'm both Nigerian and Israeli, both Jewish and Christian and I decide who I want to be'."

I meet the outspoken 28-year-old vivacious wife and mother of one in a Tel Aviv restaurant – one of only a handful still operating under the strict Covid-19 lockdown. She bubbles with enthusiasm, cackling with laughter when she remembers her early days in the country.

"It was very challenging because I was on my own. I knew very little about Israel. When the time came for me to join the army, my father flew in from Nigeria with my four-year-old sister and dropped me off at a base where I was given a uniform and recruitment ID. It was very emotional. I was so scared. I'd been planning and thinking about this my whole life and now it was happening."

After two-months' basic training, Lovv was deployed to the war room in the south of the country. Rockets were being fired daily at Israel from Gaza and she was in charge of watching the monitors to see where they fell. She'd then disperse that information to the army, decision-makers and police.

"I remember lots of sirens going off all the time. We were very close to the border and we had less than sixty seconds to get to shelter when a rocket fell."

But soon, her two-year service was coming to end and she wanted more. She asked her commander if she could stay on.

"She said that with my profile – physical and mental capabilities – I could rise to be an officer. I was shocked. But my Hebrew wasn't at a high level. So I studied day and night. We'd work twelve-hour shifts and during my hours off I'd sleep about three to five hours and then use the rest of the time to work on my Hebrew. I'm so grateful my commander believed in me because you don't always know what you're capable of until you're in the situation."

The hard work paid off and Lovv became the first female Nigerian officer in the IDF. This time, she was posted to a war room in the north of the country and placed in charge of 15, mostly female, soldiers. "It was an honor. I was like their mom."

After her release, Lovv wanted to take the tools she'd learned in the army and keep the Africa-Israel connection alive.

"I realized there was potential to do something much bigger than myself. Two years ago, I was approached by a private organization who said 'just come and tell your story'. And so I told my story in London at churches and synagogues. I could see people gaining a different perspective of Israel and Nigeria. I realized this was my purpose, to build relationships."

She launched the ShareLovv International initiative on Facebook and through it, she exposes readers to the human side of the Israeli army, being a woman in Israeli society, Jewish/Christian relations and life in Nigeria. A perspective that is uniquely hers.

"Your voice is your power. Hopefully I can create dialogues. People need to talk, to get rid of ignorance and hate and fear. We're born into an interconnected world. I don't choose one identity over the other but I am equally part of both. My personality would not be the same without one of the sides, so why choose?"

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