AFRICA MAGAZINE

arise



ISSUE 94

Ubuntu

SOCIAL CAPITAL AS YOUR INITIAL INVESTMENT

THE POWER OF ONE IDEA.

NDIKO MUZILA

FROM A CHILDHOOD DREAM TO AN EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE



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THE POWER OF ONE IDEA

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to THE POWER OF ONE IDEA, a celebration of vision, innovation and the courage to turn ideas into reality.

Every great achievement begins with an idea. But ideas alone do not change the world; they require action, discipline and persistence.

According to the World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa needs to create approximately 15 million jobs annually to keep pace with its growing workforce. This challenge calls for a generation willing to innovate, build enterprises and create opportunities.

In this edition, we celebrate individuals whose ideas are transforming education, business and communities. Their stories remind us that what begins small can become extraordinary when pursued with purpose.

Africa needs more than dreamers. It needs problem-solvers, entrepreneurs and changemakers willing to turn challenges into solutions.

As you read, reflect on the ideas you have postponed and the problems you can help solve. You do not need to have everything figured out. Start where you are, use what you have, and take the first step.

One idea can inspire a generation. One decision can begin a journey. One person can create opportunities for thousands.

Think boldly. Begin courageously. Build consistently.

The world does not only need more ideas. It needs people willing to bring them to life.

Warm regards,

Ntalasha Chisha
Founder & Visionary
Arise Africa Magazine

Seed



HOW TO BUILD SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY FROM ONE IDEA.

What if the idea you have been postponing is the beginning of something that could transform your life, create jobs and solve a problem in your community? Every great forest begins with a seed. Every successful enterprise, influential movement and transformative innovation begins with someone who sees a possibility where others see a problem. The difference is rarely the size of the first idea. It is the decision to act on it, learn from experience and keep building. You do not need to begin with an empire. You need the courage to plant your seed.

WHEN ONE IDEA CHANGES EVERYTHING

Across Africa, stories of transformation remind us that ideas can become powerful forces for change when they address real needs. Strive Masiyiwa pursued his vision of expanding access to telecommunications despite legal challenges in Zimbabwe. His journey helped lay the foundation for Econet Wireless, which grew into a major telecommunications business. In education, Fred Swaniker recognised the need to develop a new generation of African leaders. His work contributed to the establishment of African Leadership Academy and African Leadership University, institutions designed to nurture leadership and entrepreneurial talent. The same principle is visible in agriculture. In Guinea, entrepreneur Bah Hassanatou founded Jumelle Agri-Business, turning pineapple production into a juice enterprise. According to the African Development Bank, after receiving business training, mentorship and digital management support, her company nearly tripled its annual turnover, cultivated 45,000 pineapples and employed 17 people, including five permanent employees. These journeys began with different ideas, but they share a lesson: an idea becomes valuable when it solves a problem and creates something people need. Africa needs such thinking in education, healthcare, agriculture, technology, financial services and many other sectors. Our communities are not short of challenges. We need more people willing to turn those challenges into opportunities for meaningful solutions.

FROM IDEA TO ACTION

One of the greatest mistakes aspiring entrepreneurs and innovators make is waiting for perfect conditions. They wait for capital, the right connections, a sophisticated office or the perfect moment. Preparation matters, but endless preparation can become a comfortable form of procrastination. Start by identifying a problem. Who experiences it? How does it affect their lives? What solutions already exist, and what could you improve? Next, test your idea on a small scale. If you want to launch a food business, begin with a manageable batch and gather feedback. If you want to create an educational service, work with a small group of learners. If you envision a technology platform, test the simplest version that can demonstrate its value. Listen, improve and repeat. As your idea gains traction, develop the systems needed to sustain it: financial management, customer relationships, reliable delivery, partnerships and a clear growth strategy. An idea may inspire people, but disciplined execution is what builds an institution. Remember, starting small is not the same as thinking small. Your first step can be modest while your long-term vision remains ambitious.



YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES ARE NOT YOUR CEILING

For many African young people, the road from idea to enterprise is complicated by limited capital, unemployment, unequal access to opportunities and inadequate support systems. Determination alone cannot eliminate these structural barriers. However, resourcefulness, practical skills, collaboration and careful planning can help you navigate them. You can begin by learning a marketable skill, speaking to potential customers, finding a mentor, forming a partnership or testing demand before investing heavily. Seek opportunities to learn from people who have already travelled a similar path. Do not confuse visibility with progress. A business does not become successful simply because it has a logo, an impressive social media page or a grand announcement. Progress comes from creating value, earning trust, managing resources responsibly and consistently delivering on your promise. Build something useful before worrying about making it look big.

THE ARISE AFRICA CHALLENGE: PLANT YOUR SEED

Here is your challenge: within the next seven days, take one practical step towards an idea you believe in.

1. **Identify one problem affecting your community, school, workplace or industry.**
2. **Write down your solution in a few clear sentences.**
3. **Speak to five people who experience the problem and listen to their feedback.**
4. **Take one action to test your idea, even if your resources are limited.**
5. **Review what you learn and decide what to improve next.**

You do not have to change an entire nation in one day. You can begin by helping one learner, serving one customer, supporting one farmer or solving one problem. Small beginnings can create foundations for much larger achievements. Africa's future will be shaped not only by the problems we discuss, but by the solutions we build and the institutions we leave behind. The seed may look insignificant today. With patience, discipline, learning and the right support, it can grow into something that benefits generations. Plant the seed. Nurture the roots. Build the forest. Your next great achievement may begin with one idea and the decision to act on it.

“AFRICA'S NEXT BREAKTHROUGH MAY NOT BEGIN IN A BOARDROOM. IT MAY BEGIN IN A CLASSROOM, A VILLAGE, A SMALL WORKSHOP OR THE MIND OF A YOUNG PERSON WHO REFUSES TO GIVE UP.”



SOLVE A PROBLEM, NOT AN AMBITION

Many people start businesses because they want to become wealthy, famous or financially independent. While these ambitions are valid, they are not enough to build a sustainable enterprise. Successful businesses begin with a clear understanding of what people need and a commitment to finding better ways to meet those needs. Before asking, “What business can I start?” ask, “What problem can I solve?”

Across Africa, farmers struggle to access reliable markets, parents seek affordable quality education, and small businesses need better packaging and distribution. Each challenge presents an opportunity for someone willing to listen, understand the problem and develop a practical solution. The most promising opportunities are not always glamorous; sometimes, they are found in everyday frustrations that people are willing to pay to overcome.

Consider Ghanaian entrepreneur Gregory Rockson, co-founder of mPharma. The company was established to address challenges in access to affordable, quality medicines by improving the pharmaceutical supply chain. Its story illustrates how identifying a real problem in healthcare can inspire a business designed around improving access and availability.

The lesson is simple: customers may admire your ambition, but they return because you deliver value. Before investing heavily, speak to potential customers, study existing solutions and identify what is missing. Test your idea on a manageable scale, learn from feedback and improve what you offer.

Your ambition determines how far you hope to go; the problem you solve gives people a reason to support your journey. Africa needs enterprises that do more than generate income. It needs businesses that create jobs, respond to genuine needs and improve lives.

Do not begin by asking how big your business can become. Begin by discovering how useful it can be. Find the problem. Understand the people. Build the solution. Let growth follow value.

NDIKO MUZILA: FROM A CHILDHOOD DREAM TO AN EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE.

In 1996, a young girl in Nata, Botswana, began teaching other children at her mother's homestead. At approximately ten years old, Ndiko Muzila was already displaying an interest that would later shape her professional life. Nearly three decades later, that early passion has evolved into an educational enterprise, a publishing career and a wider commitment to community development. Her story is one of turning an idea into an institution. It also raises an important question for Africa's emerging generation of entrepreneurs: what can happen when a personal passion is developed into a sustainable enterprise that creates opportunities for others?

A DREAM THAT STARTED IN CHILDHOOD

Muzila's journey began with an interest in helping other children learn. Rather than allowing that interest to remain a childhood experience, she pursued formal education at the University of Botswana, where she developed a vision for a professional homeschooling business. After graduating in 2012, she gained teaching experience before taking steps to establish her own educational venture.



In 2013, she founded Dawn Bell Academy, laying the groundwork for what would become a growing network of learning centres.The transition from classroom experience to entrepreneurship marked an important step in her journey. It required translating an educational idea into a business capable of responding to the needs of students and families. Her experience illustrates a broader lesson about enterprise development: identifying a need can be the beginning of a business, but building a lasting institution requires planning, professional development and the ability to adapt.

BUILDING AN EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE

Dawn Bell Academy has expanded its services to include homeschooling, tutorials, remediation and supplementary learning for primary and secondary school students. Its official website lists 30 campuses across Botswana, with operations spanning Tlokweng, Gaborone and other locations. The enterprise's growth has also created significant employment opportunities. The academy has employed more than 325 educators and serves over 3,700 clients, reflecting the scale of its operations. Beyond its numbers, the academy stands out as a model of education-based entrepreneurship, demonstrating how a specialised service can evolve into a thriving enterprise while creating opportunities for teachers and expanding learning options for families. One of Muzila's notable contributions to this vision has been her decision to introduce a minimum wage of P5,000 at Dawn Bell Academy two years ago, setting a standard that is significantly above Botswana's government-set minimum wage. This decision reflects a deliberate commitment to valuing educators, recognising their contribution to the institution's success and demonstrating that investment in employees can form part of a broader vision for sustainable business growth. For aspiring entrepreneurs, Muzila's journey offers an important lesson: building a successful enterprise is not only about identifying a market opportunity and expanding operations, but also about creating meaningful employment and treating people as an essential part of the organisation's growth. Her experience underscores the importance of turning ideas into practical solutions, maintaining service quality and building a business whose impact extends beyond its financial performance.

THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE WRITTEN WORD

Muzila's professional activities extend beyond education management. She is also an author, trainer, consultant and publisher. Her official profile lists 59 books, while other professional information has cited different totals. Her involvement in publishing adds another dimension to her work: the development and distribution of knowledge beyond the classroom. Educational books, training materials and inspirational writing can support learning, communicate ideas and encourage readers to explore new possibilities. For Africa, where access to relevant learning resources remains an important development priority, authors and educators have a role in strengthening knowledge production and sharing. Muzila's work across education and publishing illustrates how professional expertise can be applied through different channels to reach wider audiences.

LEADERSHIP BEYOND BUSINESS

Muzila is also identified with pastoral ministry and humanitarian work, including community initiatives and youth mentorship. These activities broaden the scope of her professional profile beyond business leadership. Her public recognition has included awards associated with entrepreneurship, authorship and community building. In November 2024, she received four awards at the Glitz Awards for BW Celebs. She also pledged the P25,000 prize associated with the Most Voted Award towards purchasing chairs for pupils at Sowa Junior Secondary School.

“FROM TEACHING CHILDREN IN HER VILLAGE TO BUILDING AN EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE ACROSS BOTSWANA, NDIKO MUZILA’S JOURNEY IS A TESTAMENT TO THE POWER OF VISION, THE COURAGE TO BUILD, AND THE DETERMINATION TO TURN PURPOSE INTO LASTING IMPACT.”





The decision connected recognition with a practical educational need. It also highlights how business success and public visibility can provide opportunities to support community initiatives. Leadership, in this context, extends beyond establishing an organisation or accumulating professional achievements. It also involves recognising needs, mobilising resources and using available opportunities to contribute to the wellbeing of others.

UNLEASHING AFRICA'S NEXT GENERATION

Muzila's journey speaks to the wider potential of African entrepreneurship. Across the continent, individuals identify problems, develop solutions and build enterprises that can contribute to employment, education and social progress. The challenge is creating environments where such initiatives can grow sustainably. Young Africans do not need to begin with large institutions or extensive resources. They need the willingness to identify opportunities, develop relevant skills and turn ideas into practical solutions. However, ambition must be matched with sound planning, accountability and a commitment to delivering value. Muzila's progression from teaching children in Nata to leading an expanding educational enterprise offers an example of how an early interest can develop into a professional undertaking with a wider reach.

Her story reinforces a central message of the UNLEASHED edition: potential becomes meaningful when it is translated into action. Africa's future will be shaped by people who build institutions, share knowledge, create employment and invest in the next generation. The task is not simply to recognise talent, but to develop it into initiatives that respond to real needs. Sometimes, the beginnings of a lasting institution can be found in the simplest act of service. What matters is the vision to see its possibilities and the commitment to build upon them.

THE LEGACY FRAMES















THE POWER OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP: HOW TO NURTURE AN IDEA INTO LASTING IMPACT

Every great achievement begins with an idea, but not every idea becomes a reality. The difference often lies in how it is nurtured. Ideas require more than passion and ambition. They need strategic leadership, deliberate decisions, meaningful relationships and the discipline to turn possibilities into progress.

For young African entrepreneurs, innovators and aspiring leaders, the challenge is not simply to dream big. It is to understand what the dream requires, identify the right opportunities and develop a practical path towards achieving it.

Strategic leadership begins with clarity. Before investing time and resources, understand the problem your idea seeks to solve, the people it serves and the value it creates. A compelling vision gives direction, but a clear strategy determines the steps needed to move forward.

The next step is to start small while thinking long term. You do not need to build an empire overnight. Test your idea, listen to feedback, learn from mistakes and improve your approach. Small, consistent actions can provide the foundation for something much greater.

Strategic leaders also understand that growth rarely happens alone. They build relationships with mentors, partners, customers and people who bring different skills and perspectives. The right partnership can open doors, mobilise resources and help an idea reach communities far beyond its original boundaries.

Equally important is adaptability. Markets change, challenges emerge and initial plans sometimes fail. Effective leaders remain committed to their purpose while being flexible enough to change their methods. They measure progress, manage resources responsibly and make decisions based on evidence rather than excitement alone.

Above all, nurturing an idea requires patience. Meaningful impact is rarely built in a day. It grows through discipline, learning, resilience and the courage to keep improving.

Africa needs more than people with brilliant ideas. It needs leaders who can transform those ideas into businesses, institutions and solutions that improve lives.

Your idea may be the beginning, but your strategy, leadership and consistency will determine how far it goes.



LEVERAGING UBUNTU: SOCIAL CAPITAL AS YOUR INITIAL INVESTMENT

What if your first business investment is not money, but a relationship? For many young African entrepreneurs, accessing bank loans or venture capital is difficult, particularly without collateral, financial records or an established business. Yet, while money may be limited, opportunities can emerge through the people we know, the trust we build and the communities we belong to.

Ubuntu, often expressed through the philosophy “I am because we are,” reminds us that progress can be strengthened through cooperation. In business, this translates into social capital: the relationships, reputation and mutual goodwill that can open doors long before formal financing becomes available.

A mentor can introduce you to an experienced supplier. A friend with professional skills might help you develop your brand at an affordable rate. A local retailer could agree to stock your products, while a community association might connect you with potential customers. These relationships can reduce initial costs, expand your network and provide access to opportunities that money alone cannot guarantee.

Imagine launching a peanut butter brand without enough money to purchase packaging and produce a large batch. Rather than borrowing immediately, you could negotiate with a groundnut supplier for a small initial order, approach a packaging provider about affordable quantities and invite trusted customers to place pre-orders under clear terms. Each agreement becomes a practical step towards launching the business. The key is to communicate honestly, calculate your costs and deliver what you promise.

However, social capital requires responsibility. Do not treat friendship as free labour, pressure relatives to invest or mistake verbal encouragement for guaranteed financial support. Respect people's contributions, honour agreements and build partnerships where everyone understands the benefits and risks.

Your network is not simply a list of contacts; it is a community of relationships that must be nurtured. Attend industry events, volunteer, share knowledge, support other entrepreneurs and maintain connections even when you need nothing.

You may not control how much money you start with, but you can control the trust you build. Sometimes, the first door to opportunity opens through a relationship long before it opens through a bank.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK

Great books challenge your thinking, strengthen your discipline and inspire you to pursue what is possible. Here are three reads to fuel your next chapter.

01. ATOMIC HABITS: JAMES CLEAR

Discover how small, consistent improvements can lead to remarkable results over time. The lesson: Small actions, repeated daily, create lasting change.

02. GRIT: ANGELA DUCKWORTH

Explore why passion, perseverance and commitment matter when pursuing long-term goals. The lesson: Talent may open doors, but persistence helps you keep moving forward.

03. THE ALCHEMIST: PAULO COELHO

Follow a young shepherd's journey of self-discovery, courage and the pursuit of his dreams. The lesson: Pursuing your dreams requires courage, faith and a willingness to embrace the journey.

YOUR NEXT MOVE: Choose one book, start reading and apply one lesson to your life this week. Don't just turn the pages, transform your perspective.

THE ARISE CHALLENGE

For the next seven days, choose one thing you have been postponing and take one meaningful step towards it daily.
Make the call. Send the message. Submit the application. Finish the proposal. Begin the project.
Your step does not have to be big. It just has to be real.
At the end of each day, ask yourself: "Did I move one step closer to my goal today?"

DID YOU KNOW?

Procrastination can keep great ideas trapped in intention. Taking action, even when uncertain, helps you build confidence, learn and gain momentum.
You do not need the perfect moment to begin. Take the step. Build momentum. Unleash your potential.

TOOLBOX

THIS WEEK'S TOOL: TRELLO

An idea is only the beginning. Trello helps you turn plans into progress by organising tasks, setting deadlines, assigning responsibilities and tracking projects on visual boards. Whether you are launching a business, managing a campaign or working towards a personal goal, Trello helps you see what needs to be done and what comes next.

WHY IT MATTERS

Pioneers do not wait for everything to fall into place. They break big ambitions into manageable steps and keep moving forward. Trello helps you organise your priorities, coordinate with others and monitor progress, making it easier to turn intention into action. Don't just dream about what's possible. Plan it. Track it. Build it. Unleash your ideas.

THE IDEA THAT BRINGS AFRICA BACK TO ITS ROOTS



HOW NICOLE "NICCI" KHOURY IS CONNECTING AFRICAN HERITAGE, CREATIVITY AND PAN-AFRICAN VISION

What if Africa's next great transformation begins not by looking elsewhere for answers, but by rediscovering the wisdom, identity and creativity already within its people?

For Nicole "Nicci" Khoury, culture is more than a memory of the past. It is a foundation upon which Africa can build its future. Through her work in music, media, cultural preservation and humanitarian initiatives, she represents a vision of an Africa that understands its roots while confidently shaping its destiny.

Across the continent, from the rhythms of West Africa to the storytelling traditions of Southern Africa, culture has always carried the knowledge, values and aspirations of our people. Yet, in a world where African stories are often interpreted through outside perspectives, reclaiming the power to tell our own stories has become essential. Africa must not only participate in global conversations; it must define its own narrative.

Through her engagement with artists and initiatives such as Isintu Crown, Nicci champions the importance of creating platforms where African stories, traditions and creative expressions can thrive. Her approach recognises that cultural identity and economic opportunity need not compete. When supported by vision, structure and innovation, African creativity can preserve heritage while opening doors for new generations.

Her Pan-African outlook also speaks to a deeper truth: Africa's strength lies in its diversity, but its possibilities expand when its people recognise their shared humanity and interconnected future. Our languages, kingdoms, music, philosophies and traditions are not barriers separating us. They are threads in a wider African story.

For young Africans, the lesson is clear. Progress does not require abandoning our roots. It requires understanding them, renewing their relevance and carrying their wisdom into the future.

Africa does not need to become someone else to rise. It needs the confidence to become more fully itself.

Perhaps the most powerful idea is this: when Africa reconnects with its identity, it gains more than cultural pride. It gains a foundation from which to imagine, create and build its own future.



THE COURAGE TO START BEFORE YOU ARE READY

Many great ideas never see the light of day, not because they lack potential, but because their creators spend too much time waiting for the perfect moment. They wait for sufficient capital, the right connections, more qualifications or the confidence that everything will work out. Meanwhile, opportunities pass, and someone else acts on an idea they once imagined. The truth is that you rarely feel completely ready for the things that matter most.

Consider William Kamkwamba from Malawi, whose story became an inspiration to young innovators worldwide. When his family could no longer afford his school fees, William continued learning independently through books. With limited resources, he built a windmill from discarded materials to generate electricity for his family home. He did not have a fully equipped laboratory, substantial funding or access to advanced technology. He had curiosity, determination and the willingness to try. His experiment became the beginning of a remarkable journey that brought international attention to his ingenuity.

William's story reminds us that a lack of resources does not have to mean a lack of possibility. Sometimes, what we need most is the courage to begin with what we have.

For young Africans dreaming of building businesses, launching initiatives or transforming their communities, starting small can be a powerful advantage. Test your product with a few customers. Share your idea with potential partners. Develop a simple version of your solution. Listen to feedback and improve. Every step provides lessons that planning alone cannot deliver.

Of course, courage must be accompanied by wisdom. Starting before you feel ready does not mean ignoring risks or investing money you cannot afford to lose. It means taking calculated steps, learning from mistakes and adapting when circumstances change.

Africa needs a generation that does not merely admire innovation but practises it. We need young people willing to create, experiment and develop solutions to the challenges around them. You do not need to see the entire road before taking the first step. Sometimes, clarity comes through movement. Your idea will not change your life because you imagined it. It gets its chance when you find the courage to begin.

ONE IDEA, A THOUSAND VOICES



HOW DR. BRENDA BUKOWA IS TURNING KNOWLEDGE INTO INFLUENCE AND LEADERSHIP

What happens when one woman's pursuit of knowledge becomes a pathway for others to follow? Sometimes, an idea begins in a classroom, not as a business plan or technological invention, but as a determination to understand, challenge and improve the world. Dr. Brenda Bukowa's journey illustrates how academic excellence can grow into institutional leadership, public influence and opportunities for future generations.

Recognised in her profile as Zambia's first woman to earn a PhD in Media Studies, Dr. Bukowa has built a career around the power of knowledge and communication. Her academic journey, spanning the University of Zambia, the University of Oslo, Ohio University and the University of KwaZulu Natal, reflects a commitment to learning that extends beyond personal achievement.

As Head of the Department of Media and Communication Studies at the University of Zambia, she contributes to shaping the next generation of communicators and researchers. Her work in media policy, internet freedom, digital culture and child online safety demonstrates how an idea developed through research can influence public conversations, institutions and policy.

Her contribution to Zambia's Child Online Protection Strategy, alongside UNICEF and ZICTA, illustrates an important principle: knowledge becomes more valuable when it helps solve real problems. Through research, professional training and public engagement, Dr. Bukowa has helped connect academic insight with issues affecting society.

Beyond academia, her involvement in business through Builders Village Limited reflects another dimension of her leadership. Her commitment to girls' education and youth empowerment also points to a vision that extends beyond professional success towards creating opportunities for others.

For young Africans, her journey offers a powerful lesson: your idea does not have to remain within the boundaries of your first qualification, job or opportunity. With curiosity, discipline and courage, knowledge can open new doors and give your voice greater reach.

The power of one idea is not measured only by what it achieves for its originator, but by how many lives it influences.

Dr. Brenda Bukowa's story reminds us that one idea, nurtured through learning and purposeful action, can become a thousand voices shaping Africa's future.



“YOU DON'T NEED A THOUSAND IDEAS TO CHANGE THE WORLD. YOU NEED ONE IDEA, THE COURAGE TO START AND THE DISCIPLINE TO KEEP BUILDING.”

ARISE AFRICA MAGAZINE – PRIME EDITION SPOTLIGHTS LEADERS, INNOVATORS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE SHAPING AFRICA’S FUTURE. THIS EDITION IS DEDICATED TO INSPIRING, IMPACTING, AND EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PRACTICAL TOOLS AND TRANSFORMATIVE INSIGHTS TO LEAD PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIVES.

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