

TEFCIRCLE

OCTOBER 2025



AFRICA SPEAKS:

Driving Inclusion, Innovation
and Impact

INSIDE *this* EDITION

Editor's Note	3
The Big Story	4
Strategic Engagements	14
Off-The Tarmac: TEF in Action	18
Partner Spotlight	24
TEF in the News	30
Thought Leadership	38
Alumni & Mentor Spotlight	52
Announcements	59

TEFCircle is the Tony Elumelu Foundation's proprietary publication, providing updates on our alumni, partners, mentor network, and activities across the global entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Executive Producer
Somachi Chris-Asoluka

Editor-In-Chief
Moyosore Awotile

Editors
Chidinma Nwaukwa
Grace Matthew

Creative Director
Victor Oga

EDITOR'S NOTE

Across boardrooms and borders this October, Africa spoke in the language of progress, purpose, and partnership, reaffirming a simple truth: Africa's development cannot be outsourced; it must be led, built, and owned by Africans.

From Washington D.C., where our Founder, Tony O. Elumelu, CFR, joined global economic leaders at the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings, to the thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems of Dakar, Nairobi, Kampala, and Kigali, it is clear; Africa's transformation will be driven by its entrepreneurs, powered by its youth, and accelerated by digital inclusion.

When our Founder declared, "Inclusion is not automatic; it is deliberate," he clearly articulated what we do daily at the Tony Elumelu Foundation: building systems that democratise access, unlock potential, and create prosperity that endures.

This October edition captures that conviction in action. You will see it in the launch of the second year of the IYBA–WE4A Programme, where women are building green, investable enterprises across eight African countries, and also in the launch of the fourth iteration of our Aguka Ideation Programme, through which we awaken Rwanda's youth innovation and optimism.

This issue is a celebration of the young women and men visionaries that are redefining Africa's story. Their achievements remind us that the future of this continent will not be determined



by aid or chance, but by deliberate inclusion, sustained investment, and the unstoppable spirit of African enterprise.

Thank you for walking this journey with us.

With purpose,
Moyo Awotile
Editor-in-Chief, TEFCircle

THE BIG STORY

Amplifying Africa's Digital Transformation on the Global Stage

At the 2025 IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings in Washington D.C., the voice of Africa's entrepreneurs echoed powerfully on the world stage. Our Founder, Tony O. Elumelu, CFR, joined global economic leaders to explore a defining question of our era: how do we boost productivity growth in the digital age?

On a panel alongside Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the IMF; Ruth Porat, President and Chief Investment Officer of Alphabet and Google; Simon Johnson,

Ronald A. Kurtz Professor of Entrepreneurship at MIT Sloan; and Mohammed Al-Jadaan, Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, our founder reinforced a message that is reshaping global development strategy: *"We must know that inclusion is not automatic; inclusion is deliberate. We need to have African voices on the table, and we must understand that digital inclusion in the 21st century is economic inclusion."*

- Tony O. Elumelu, CFR

Mr. Elumelu spotlighted the transformative impact of the Tony Elumelu Foundation's partnership with Google.org, a collaboration anchored in strengthening TEFConnect, Africa's largest digital entrepreneurship platform, and accelerating the growth of women-led enterprises across the continent. TEF is ensuring no African innovator is left behind. The partnership with Google.org is more than technological support, it is a strategic intervention to remove





barriers, democratise resources, and unlock opportunity at scale. Standing before the global financial community, Mr. Elumelu articulated a future in which Africa is not a beneficiary of development, but a co-architect of global prosperity:

- A continent where digital access is a universal right.
- Where women entrepreneurs scale world-changing companies.
- Where youth innovation drives employment and export-led growth.
- Where technology accelerates inclusive, sustainable development.

Read his full remark:

When we speak of productivity in the digital

age, we are really talking about people. Productivity is not only about output per worker — it is about opportunity per person.

In Africa, we see both the challenge and the promise of this new era. Yes, our digital gaps are large — connectivity, infrastructure, skills. But we also have something the world envies: youth, creativity, and a hunger to build. We have already leapfrogged before.

Mobile money transformed finance across the continent — not because we had the best infrastructure, but because entrepreneurs saw a need and innovated around our constraints.

Artificial intelligence can be the next great leap — in healthcare, where diagnostic tools reach remote clinics; in education, where content becomes accessible in local languages; and in agriculture, where data



helps small farmers improve yields. But to make this real, we must be honest about the obstacles.

Too many of our entrepreneurs lack access to affordable capital. Too many of our citizens lack digital skills. And too often, technology's benefits are captured by the few, not the many.

That is why partnerships are key — not charity, but collaboration. We need smart public-private partnerships that mobilise capital for digital infrastructure and skills, without burdening public finances.

At Heirs Holdings, we have seen how blended finance and long-term local investment can unlock value — from energy to finance to entrepreneurship. If we align incentives between government, business,

and citizens, we can multiply impact. And we must make sure that global frameworks — for AI governance, for data, for finance — include African voices. Because inclusion is not automatic; it must be intentional.

My message is simple: digital transformation must not just increase productivity — it must democratise prosperity. Africa's young people do not want sympathy; they want systems that work, skills that matter, and partners who believe.

If we invest in that — in them — then this new digital wave can finally be the one that lifts all boats, not just a few.

Thank you.



Building Economies, Investing in Society, Transforming a Continent

At the Abuja Business & Investment Summit & Expo 2025, themed “Empowering Sustainable Growth: Unlocking Potential in Emerging Markets,” Our Founder Tony O. Elumelu, CFR, delivered a compelling keynote address that underscored the urgent need for a bold, continent-wide movement of enterprise.

He emphasised that Africa can no longer rely on incremental progress. Instead, the continent must transition from merely consuming global ideas to actively creating global value. Central to his message was the imperative role of the private sector in

driving Africa's transformation, an approach grounded in the philosophy of Africapitalism, which promotes long-term, responsible investment that generates both economic prosperity and social impact.

Mr. Elumelu highlighted Heirs Holdings' portfolio in Abuja as a demonstration of this philosophy in action. He referenced the successful transformation of the Transcorp Hilton Abuja, the commissioning of the state-of-the-art Transcorp Event Centre, and continued improvements within the Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC). Collectively, these investments have created over 7,000 jobs in the Federal Capital Territory and contributed significantly to Abuja's business and hospitality landscape.

He further noted the impact of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, which has empowered over 24,000 young African entrepreneurs with seed capital, mentorship, and world-class training—641 of whom are based

in Abuja. He reiterated that sustainable prosperity cannot be achieved by a few while the majority remain excluded.

Calling for a renewed social contract between the government, private sector, and citizens, he stressed the importance of stable regulation, policy consistency, and an enabling environment that attracts long-term capital. In turn, businesses must invest ethically, responsibly, and with a commitment to national development.

Addressing concerns about investment risks in Africa, Mr. Elumelu affirmed that, although risk exists everywhere, Africa offers high returns and profound societal impact. He urged African investors to demonstrate belief in the continent by investing locally, asserting that it is neither sustainable nor patriotic to build wealth in Africa only to deploy it elsewhere.

He concluded by calling on all stakeholders to champion African excellence, nurture African innovation, and align capital with purpose. Africa's economic narrative, he stated, will be written by its own entrepreneurs, leaders, and visionaries, those committed to transforming potential

into shared prosperity.

Read his Keynote address below:

“Empowering Sustainable Growth: Unlocking Potential in Emerging Markets”

Topic: “Private Sector Leadership at the Forefront of Africa's Economic Transformation”

Good morning, honourable ministers, distinguished guests, captains of industry, policymakers, development partners, and members of the press.

Let me begin by commending the Abuja Investments Company Limited and its visionary GMD/CEO, Dr. Maureen Tamuno for this timely and strategic summit. Bringing the public and private sectors together in one room — that's how real, sustainable change begins.

I also congratulate my brother, the Honourable Minister of the FCT, Barrister Nyesom Wike, for the remarkable transformation we continue to witness here in our federal capital. Abuja is the window to our nation – I salute his unceasing efforts



to ensure our Federal Capital demonstrates our excellence.

It is both an honor and a responsibility to address you today on a subject that stands at the very heart of our continent's future—the role of private sector leadership in Africa's economic transformation.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

Africa today is at a pivotal moment in its economic journey.

We are the world's youngest continent, endowed with vast natural resources, a growing consumer market, and a dynamic entrepreneurial spirit. Yet, we also face persistent challenges—youth unemployment, infrastructure deficits, limited access to finance, climate devastation, and the lingering effects of global economic volatility. But amid these challenges lies an extraordinary opportunity: To build a new African economy driven by innovation, enterprise, and private sector leadership.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS THE ENGINE OF TRANSFORMATION

No nation has achieved sustained prosperity without a vibrant private sector. Across Africa, the private sector already contributes over 70% of the continent's GDP and over 80% of total employment. But this is not just about numbers—it's about influence and initiative. The private sector drives productivity, connects markets, mobilises investment, and builds resilience.

From fintech start-ups in Lagos to renewable energy firms in Nairobi, from agribusiness entrepreneurs in Kigali to manufacturing innovators in Johannesburg—the private sector is reimagining what is possible for Africa.

I speak from experience.

At Heirs Holdings, this belief drives everything we do. It's what I call Africapitalism — the philosophy that the private sector must lead Africa's transformation by investing long-term in sectors that generate both economic prosperity and social wealth.

LEADERSHIP BEYOND PROFIT

True leadership is not just about generating profits—it's about generating progress.

Africa's private sector must lead with a sense of purpose: Investing in skills development to empower Africa's youth. Championing sustainability and green growth as we industrialise. Building inclusive value chains that bring small enterprises and rural communities into the growth story. Driving digital transformation to unlock productivity and competitiveness.

This is what it means to lead at the forefront of transformation—not just to participate in growth, but to shape it. *“Doing well and doing good”* are not mutually exclusive — on the contrary – they are the twin foundations of Africa's transformation.

This year, Heirs Holdings celebrates 15 years of defining Africapitalism – 15 years of investments that create value, empower communities, and transform lives.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA

Our Investments in Abuja demonstrates our vision – executed! Our track record in Abuja is a living testament to our philosophy – delivered!

Through Transcorp Group, we transformed the Transcorp Hilton Abuja — from an ageing landmark, that did not do justice to our nation, into a contemporary, world-class hospitality icon. A venue that hosts the world. Today, the Transcorp Hilton stands tall as one of Africa's leading hotels — a symbol

of excellence right here in Abuja. A beacon of our potential – where Nigeria greets the world – and delivers African excellence.

We did not stop there – this year we launched the Transcorp Event Centre, a 5,000-capacity ultramodern space, cementing Abuja as a business and tourism hub. Our investment in the Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) is another example of private sector transformation in action. We know that electricity powers productivity — homes, hospitals, schools, and businesses all depend on it.

We've made progress, but challenges remain — including unpaid obligations on power generated and sold to government that limit how fast we can move. That's why today's forum matters — honest dialogue is how we build an environment where private capital thrives.

“When investors succeed, the nation succeeds.” Across our group — we directly and indirectly employ about 7,000 Nigerians here in Abuja alone.

Through the Tony Elumelu Foundation, we've empowered over 24,000 young Africans, including 641 in Abuja, each receiving non-refundable \$5,000 seed capital, training, and mentorship.

COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

For transformation to be sustainable, the private sector cannot act alone. We must build a new social contract between governments, businesses, and citizens—anchored in trust, transparency, and shared vision. Governments must create the enabling environment—sound macroeconomic policies, reliable infrastructure, and predictable regulations.

In return, the private sector must uphold ethical standards, invest locally, and deliver

tangible social impact. Public-private partnerships are the bridges that can turn ambition into achievement—whether in, digital connectivity, agriculture, transport infrastructure or power generation. For the private sector to deliver – government must support, sustain, and partner. Private capital is patient — but needs certainty.

“Predictable regulation attracts long-term investment; inconsistency drives it away.”

No investor will commit where the rules keep changing. Trust is the currency of investment — and policy stability converts trust into capital. When asked recently in Oslo, *“Why invest in Africa when the risks are so high?”*, my answer was simple: *“There is risk everywhere — but in Africa, the returns are higher, and the impact is deeper.”*

Still, optimism must be matched with structure. We need consistency, rule of law, and infrastructure that enable businesses to thrive.

FINANCING THE FUTURE

Transforming Africa requires capital—but not just any capital. It requires patient, purposeful, and Pan-African capital. The rise of African investment funds, impact investors, and diaspora financing is changing the game.

We need to deepen our capital markets, embrace fintech innovation, and expand access to credit for MSMEs—the true backbone of our economies. If we align capital with vision, Africa will not just grow; it will thrive.

A CALL TO ACTION

Ladies and gentlemen, the time for incremental change has passed. We must now lead a continental movement towards enterprise, where African businesses are not just consumers of global ideas, but creators of global value. We must be

architects of progress. I cannot succeed if the many do not succeed. Let us believe in African excellence. Let us invest in African innovation. How can we expect foreign investors to believe in us if we don't invest in our own economy? Let us build the Africa we deserve—prosperous, inclusive, and self-reliant.

"Building economies, not extracting profits" – that must be the new African business ethos!

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Africa's economic transformation will not be written in boardrooms in New York, London, or Beijing. It will be written here — by African entrepreneurs, African investors, and African leaders—standing at the forefront of history, transforming challenge into opportunity, and potential into prosperity.

Thank you.

God bless you, God bless our President, and God bless Africa.

TOE

FII Riyadh 2025: A Call for AI Accessibility to Drive Africa's Financial Transformation



"To some, it is about AI adoption; to others, it is about AI accessibility. We should, as a global community, play our role in helping to create AI access so that all of us grow simultaneously."

— Tony O. Elumelu, CFR, Founder, The Tony Elumelu Foundation at FII9

At the 9th Future Investment Initiative (FII) Summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, our Founder, Tony O. Elumelu, C.F.R., delivered a decisive and forward-looking call for AI accessibility as a prerequisite for Africa's economic and financial transformation. Speaking during the high-level plenary session titled "Financial Markets, The Energy Trilemma, or Private Capital," he joined global financial leaders to examine the forces shaping the next frontier of global investment and economic growth.



POSITIONING AFRICA IN THE GLOBAL AI FUTURE

Mr. Elumelu emphasised that while much of the world focuses on rapidly adopting artificial intelligence, Africa faces a more fundamental challenge accessibility. Without equitable access to AI tools, digital infrastructure, and investment, the continent risks being excluded from the next wave of global prosperity. He reiterated that Africa's potential is vast: a young, dynamic population; rapid digital adoption; and burgeoning innovation ecosystems. However, unlocking this potential requires deliberate global collaboration to ensure that AI becomes a catalyst for inclusion rather than a driver of inequality.

A DIALOGUE WITH GLOBAL FINANCIAL LEADERS

Mr. Elumelu shared the stage with a distinguished group of global leaders, including: Tareq A. Al-Sadhan, CEO, Saudi National Bank; Jane Fraser, CEO, Citi; Jenny Johnson, President & CEO, Franklin Templeton; Kanetsugu Mike, Chairman, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group; Ron O'Hanley, Chairman & CEO, State Street Corporation; Makoto Takashima, Chairman, Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group; Su Shan Tan, CEO, DBS Group; Sim Tshabalala, Chief Executive, Standard Bank Group; C.S.

Venkatakrishnan, Group CEO, Barclays PLC; Bill Winters, Group CEO, Standard Chartered.

Against this influential backdrop, he highlighted Africa's readiness to absorb AI-driven innovation across critical sectors, from financial services to agriculture, provided the necessary investment and technological infrastructure are made accessible.

CATALYSING SHARED PROSPERITY THROUGH AI EQUITY

Mr. Elumelu urged his peers to incorporate AI accessibility into their investment strategies and capital allocation frameworks. He stressed that democratising AI represents an opportunity to unlock new markets, empower Africa's youth, and contribute meaningfully to global economic resilience.

"We must democratise access to AI to ensure that no one is left behind. This is how we will co-create shared global prosperity."
-Tony O. Elumelu, CFR

His intervention positions Africa not as a peripheral player, but as a vital contributor to the world's technological and financial future, provided global stakeholders prioritise inclusive access and collaborative innovation.

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS

Deepening Partnerships to Scale Inclusive Growth TEF-DEG Meet-Up

Sustained development requires visionary partnerships; alliances rooted not only in shared objectives, but in shared conviction. In Lagos, the Tony Elumelu Foundation welcomed senior leaders from DEG – Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft GmbH, reinforcing a relationship anchored in empowering Africa's next generation of entrepreneurs.

Hosted by the Tony Elumelu Foundation CEO, Somachi Chris-Asoluka, the strategic dialogue convened Bernd Tilemann, Director West Africa; Clemens Finger,





Director Financial Institutions Africa; Ikenna Mbaekwe, Senior Investment Manager; and Yvonne Mitschka, Investment Manager. The engagement underscored a unified ambition: to expand opportunity for young Africans, drive private-sector-led development, and accelerate sustainable economic transformation across the continent.

A PARTNERSHIP TRANSFORMING LIVES AND ECONOMIES

In 2021, DEG partnered with the Tony Elumelu Foundation to fund an additional cohort of entrepreneurs through the TEF Entrepreneurship Programme, expanding reach, deepening impact, and advancing our mutual focus on youth and gender inclusion.

The results are compelling:

- 70% of beneficiaries are women
- 96% are between the ages of 18–30
- 165% increase in jobs created post-funding
- 83% of entrepreneurs increased their income within one year
- 14% secured follow-on capital to scale further

These outcomes are not coincidental; they are the direct consequence of intentional, targeted investment in Africa's most powerful development engine, its young, ambitious entrepreneurs.

SCALING REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT, STRENGTHENING ECOSYSTEMS

This year, the Foundation and DEG launched coordinated stakeholder sessions in Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Mali, bringing together policymakers, private-sector leaders, and ecosystem actors to build environments where African innovators can thrive. More countries will follow.

Together, we are:

- Designing enabling policies
- Expanding access to funding
- Strengthening institutional collaboration
- Amplifying support for entrepreneurship in frontier markets

This partnership exemplifies a principal core to Africapitalism: when private capital and mission-driven institutions unite, prosperity multiplies, communities advance, and economies accelerate.

Apply for \$5,000

seed capital, training, mentoring and access to networks.

Open to women with green business either in idea stage or no more than five years of operations.

Green Business Models: Sustainable Agriculture / Agro-Processing, Renewable Energy, Blue Economy / Aquaculture, Eco-tourism, Circular Economy/ Waste Management/ Biomass.
Greening of Business Models: Transportation / Logistics, Construction

Countries: Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda.



Implemented by:

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



THE TONY ELUMELU
FOUNDATION

OFF - THE TARMAC:

TEF IN ACTION

Catalysing Women's Leadership in Africa's Green Economy — WE4A Senegal

In Dakar Senegal, the Tony Elumelu Foundation advanced one of the most urgent economic imperatives of our time: ensuring African women lead and benefit from the continent's green transformation.

As part of the second cohort of the Investing in Young Businesses – Women Entrepreneurship for Africa (IYBA-WE4A) Programme, we convened women entrepreneurs from across Senegal for an immersive workshop



designed to do more than inform — it was built to inspire action, expand access, and accelerate participation in Africa's green economy.

DRIVING AWARENESS, ACCESS, AND ACTION

The goal was clear: equip women innovators with the clarity, confidence, and tools to seize this opportunity. Over the course of the session, participants explored:

- The vision and objectives of the IYBA-WE4A Programme
- Eligibility and application processes
- The unique benefits, including seed capital, mentorship, and tailored green-business training



- Practical guidance for building investment-ready, sustainability-focused ventures

Crucially, past WE4A beneficiaries shared their journeys, powerful testimonies of resilience, growth, and real-world impact. Their stories brought the Programme to life, demonstrating the tangible transformation that occurs when African women receive the right support at the right time. These engagement efforts have already contributed to a measurable rise in programme interest and applications, advancing our mission to ensure more African women build more African businesses, shaping a greener, more inclusive economic future.

SCALING A PROVEN MODEL OF GREEN EMPOWERMENT

Following a first cohort that empowered 751 women-led businesses with USD \$3.99



million in funding, this expanded phase will support more than 1,000 African women entrepreneurs with:

- USD \$5,000 non-refundable seed capital
- Targeted business training and a customised green curriculum
- Mentorship and expert-led masterclasses
- Lifetime access to TEFConnect, to drive sustained growth and investment readiness

This is not theory; it is implementation at scale. It is proof that when women are equipped to lead, communities prosper, climate solutions emerge, and Africa's green economy strengthens. As our CEO Somachi Chris-Asoluka expressed: *"This partnership continues to accelerate Africa's inclusive, green economy and demonstrates the limitless potential of African women when given the right support."*

Through the IYBA-WE4A, we are not merely increasing applications we are expanding agency, unlocking opportunity, and building a generation of women founders who will power Africa's climate leadership and economic renewal.

Expanding Green Innovation Capacity — WE4A Kenya



In Nairobi, the Tony Elumelu Foundation continued its mission to empower the next generation of women leading Africa's green economy. Through the IYBA-WE4A Programme, we convened ambitious women entrepreneurs, ecosystem leaders, and strategic partners for a high-impact workshop designed to accelerate awareness, drive strong applications, and nurture investment-ready green innovators across East Africa. Delivered in collaboration with the European Union, the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and GIZ GmbH, this initiative reflects a shared commitment to sustainable growth, gender inclusion, and entrepreneurship-driven development.

INSPIRATION, PRACTICAL GUIDANCE, AND MOMENTUM

The Nairobi workshop equipped participants with:

- A deep understanding of the WE4A mission and selection process

- Practical guidance on building investment-ready ventures
- Insights into the programme's training, mentorship, and green curriculum
- Clarity on securing USD \$5,000 non-refundable seed capital and long-term business support

Beyond the information, the session delivered inspiration. Past beneficiaries shared real-world experiences of growth and resilience — demonstrating that when African women receive targeted support, they can scale green solutions, create jobs, and build sustainable enterprises that uplift communities.

DRIVING DEMAND, EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY, ADVANCING IMPACT

Our objective was not only to inform, but to catalyse ambition and ensure more women seize this extraordinary opportunity. We are already witnessing strengthened interest and increased programme registrations — a testament to the hunger, creativity, and determination driving Africa's women entrepreneurs.

Through these on-ground engagements, the Tony Elumelu Foundation continues to democratise access, unlock capacity, and empower the doers, builders, and visionaries shaping Africa's green future — one entrepreneur at a time.

Applications are open to women founders from Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda via www.TEFConnect.com.

Igniting Green Ambition — WE4A Uganda



Kampala reaffirmed the unstoppable momentum of Africa's women entrepreneurs as the Tony Elumelu Foundation hosted another high-impact IYBA-WE4A Application Drive Workshop, empowering Ugandan innovators building resilient, climate-focused enterprises.

The energy in the room was unmistakable — a powerful blend of curiosity, determination, and readiness to seize opportunity. Participants gained practical insights into the programme structure, application requirements, and the long-term support available through TEF and its partners.

And the impact was instant: multiple women registered on the spot, eager to join a community shaping Africa's green economy from the ground up.

Beyond formal training and guidance, the session came alive through the voices of past WE4A beneficiaries, who shared candid stories of growth, resilience, and transformation. Their successes were not abstract — they were present, lived, and relatable, fueling belief and ambition among aspiring founders in the room.

In a moment that beautifully captured the essence of community and continuity, one of our WE4A alumni returned after the event to reconnect, share insights, and encourage new applicants, a testament to the programme's enduring value and the strength of the ecosystem we are building.

Through the IYBA-WE4A partnership implemented with the European Union, OACPS, BMZ, and GIZ GmbH, Ugandan women entrepreneurs now stand to benefit from:

- USD \$5,000 in non-refundable seed capital
- Tailored business and green innovation training
- Mentorship and expert-led masterclasses
- Lifetime access to TEFConnect for scale and visibility

Each workshop deepens awareness, strengthens participation, and expands the cohort of African women ready to lead the continent's climate and sustainability agenda.

Uganda reminded us yet again: when African women have access, support, and belief, they do not wait; they build.

Women founders from Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda are invited to apply via www.TEFConnect.com

Driving Policy Collaboration and Expanding Green Prosperity — TEF in Mali



In Bamako, the Tony Elumelu Foundation continued to deepen its engagement across Africa's emerging green economy landscape — advancing a development model rooted in partnership, innovation, and entrepreneurial empowerment. In collaboration with Mali's Ministry for the Promotion of Private Investment, SMEs, and National Entrepreneurship, led by H.E. Safia Boly, the Foundation convened national stakeholders, green economy actors, TEF alumni, and mentors for a strategic roundtable conversation.

This dialogue forms part of the Tony Elumelu Foundation's ongoing DEG-supported, country-level engagement series, aimed at shaping enabling environments for Africa's next generation of sustainable enterprises.

BUILDING ECOSYSTEMS THAT EMPOWER ENTREPRENEURS

Through this convening, TEF advanced three core priorities:



- Strengthening collaboration between government, private-sector actors, and entrepreneurship networks
- Amplifying support for green innovators and emerging sectors
- Co-creating policy pathways that unlock climate-conscious, inclusive growth

The discussions reinforced a shared vision: when governments, investors, and entrepreneurship institutions move in alignment, Africa's innovators can scale out solutions that create jobs, build resilience, and drive sustainable prosperity.

IMPACT IN NUMBERS: MALI'S ENTREPRENEURS LEADING CHANGE

Mali stands as a testament to the Foundation's long-term commitment and catalytic impact:

- 3,000+ Malian entrepreneurs funded
- Average monthly turnover of USD \$4,248 per entrepreneur

- Over 250,000 direct and indirect jobs created across the country

These figures are not statistics; they represent families lifted, ideas realised, SMEs formalised, and futures re-engineered through entrepreneurship. This is Africapitalism in action: capital, training, and opportunity transforming communities from within.

As we continue our mission across the continent, the question is no longer whether local entrepreneurs can shape Mali's sustainable future, they already are. Our mandate is to accelerate, scale, and strengthen the systems that enable them.

The TEF delegation has already convened stakeholders in Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Mali, and more nations are next. The journey continues; the momentum builds, and Africa's entrepreneurial revolution marches forward.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Aguka Ideation Programme — Awakening Rwanda's Next Generation of Innovators

In Rwanda, a powerful movement is taking shape, one that places young innovators at the heart of national development. Through the Aguka Ideation Entrepreneurship Programme, the Tony Elumelu Foundation, in partnership with UNDP Rwanda, the European Union, and the Ministry of Youth and Arts, is accelerating a new wave of youth-led enterprises ready to contribute meaningfully to Rwanda's socio-economic transformation.

Aguka, meaning “arise” or “wake up,” reflects a bold ambition: to awaken talent, ignite innovation, and empower young Rwandans to transform ideas into bankable, scalable ventures.

CATALYSING YOUTH INNOVATION WITH TANGIBLE SUPPORT

At the close of the 2025 programme cycle, the top 100 entrepreneurs were awarded USD \$3,000 in seed capital, a catalytic investment designed to move ideas from concept to execution. This milestone demonstrates the partners shared belief in the power of early-stage capital to unlock long-term entrepreneurial success.

This support is supplemented by the programme's comprehensive offering:

- World-class business and leadership training



- Expert mentorship from seasoned practitioners
- Hybrid delivery to ensure national access
- Exposure to investors and stakeholders
- Strong peer and alumni networks

Together, these elements create a pipeline

of future-ready founders equipped to build competitive, resilient ventures across critical sectors including technology, agriculture, education, health, and renewable energy.

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO YOUTH PROSPERITY

At the award ceremony, Hon. Utumatwishima Jean Nepo Abdallah,



Minister of Youth and Arts, engaged directly with the entrepreneurs, applauding their ambition and reflecting on the programme's achievements and future opportunities. He reinforced a message that sits at the core of Rwanda's youth development agenda:

"Support does not end here. Stay focused. Keep learning. Nurture your ideas. Rwanda believes in you."

The Minister reaffirmed the government's unwavering dedication to creating inclusive opportunities and reminded participants that their innovation journey continues, with the Ministry committed to listening to their ideas and supporting their growth.

A PLATFORM FOR A GENERATION READY TO BUILD AFRICA

With applications for the Aguka 2025/2026 cohort opening 1 November 2025 on

TEFConnect.com, Rwandan youth have the opportunity to join a community defined by purpose, resilience, and possibility.

This is more than a programme — it is a blueprint for youth-driven transformation. It is a call to rise, create, and build the Africa we envision.

We are powering a future where young Africans do not wait for opportunity — they create it.



Launch of 2026 Aguka Ideation Programme

APPLICATIONS OPEN 1 NOVEMBER FOR 100 YOUNG RWANDANS TO APPLY FOR TRAINING AND FUNDING

A Partnership of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, the UNDP, the European Union, and the Rwandan Ministry of Youth and Arts

The Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF), in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union (EU), and the Rwandan Ministry of Youth and Arts (MoYA), launches the fourth Aguka Ideation Entrepreneurship Programme, which will support for 100 young Rwandan entrepreneurs. This follows the

success of previous cohorts, empowering 300 young Rwandans, with USD \$900,000 in total seed capital and business training.

Derived from the Kinyarwanda word "Aguka," meaning "Arise", the Programme reflects a shared mission to empower Rwanda's youth to build sustainable businesses that transform communities. The 2026 Aguka Ideation Programme prioritises youth-led ventures in technology, agriculture, health, education, and renewable energy—key sectors driving Rwanda's sustainable development agenda.

"At the Tony Elumelu Foundation, we remain deeply committed to empowering Africa's next generation of changemakers," said Somachi Chris-Asoluka, CEO of the Tony Elumelu Foundation. "Aguka demonstrates how public-private partnerships can deliver real impact. Every young Rwandan with an idea holds the power to transform their



community, create jobs, and contribute to Rwanda's economic transformation."

Programme Benefits include:

- Entrepreneurship training on TEFCConnect covering business management, financial literacy, and sustainability.
- Expert mentorship from African business leaders and professionals.
- Seed capital of USD \$3,000 to launch or scale ventures.
- Networking access to TEF's continental entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Selected beneficiaries of previous Aguka cohorts have launched innovative businesses that are already making an impact across Rwanda:

- Naomi Iradukunda, founder of Ira EcoSolutions, who developed affordable biodegradable packaging, using banana fibres, reducing plastic waste, while creating jobs for women in Musanze District.
- Jean Bosco Hirwa, through AgriSmart Rwanda, introduced solar-powered irrigation systems to smallholder farmers,

increasing yields and improving food security.

- Keza Umutoni, a Kigali-based entrepreneur, expanded her youth-led digital literacy start-up Tech4Teens, training over 500 secondary school students in coding and digital skills.

Applications for the 2026 Aguka Cohort open November 1, 2025, and close January 11, 2026, via www.TEFCConnect.com. Selected entrepreneurs will undergo six weeks of intensive business training, followed by mentorship, business development support, and a national pitching competition. Each selected entrepreneur will receive USD \$3,000 in non-refundable seed funding and lifetime access to TEF's pan-African entrepreneurship network.

Read more about the programme's impact here.



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Youth
and Arts



THE TONY ELUMELU
FOUNDATION

EMPOWERING YOUTH-LED BUSINESSES IN RWANDA

Calling All young women, men, and persons living with disabilities in Rwanda, aged 18–30, to apply to the 2025 Aguka Ideation Entrepreneurship Programme, for world class business management training, mentorship & and non-refundable **seed capital of \$3,000**

Deadline: January 11, 2026

**Apply now on
www.TEFCConnect.com**



TEF IN THE NEWS

UNICEF GenU 9JA Impacts 11 Million Youth — TEF Partnership Spotlights on Global Stage

The Tony Elumelu Foundation continues to be recognised as a driving force in shaping Africa's youth and entrepreneurship ecosystem. In a recent feature by The Guardian Nigeria, the UNICEF Generation Unlimited (GenU) 9JA programme — proudly supported by TEF — was celebrated for empowering over 11 million young Nigerians in just four years.



This milestone stands as a testament to the power of strategic partnership, private-sector leadership, and investment in Africa's next generation. Through platforms like TEFConnect, mentorship networks, and entrepreneurship support, TEF remains a key partner in GenU's mission to move young Africans from learning to earning.

The GenU 9JA programme, backed by government, private sector, and international agencies — continues to deliver large-scale impact:

- 255,000+ youth gained access to digital learning and mobile data
- 400,000+ young people connected to skills and employment pathways
- 20,000 young women trained in digital and technical skills
- 85,000 youth paired with mentors
- 665,000 youth engaged in social impact initiatives
- 300,000+ youth mobilised for environmental action through Green Rising

A SHARED COMMITMENT TO YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Speaking on the programme's success, Somachi Chris-Asoluka, CEO of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, reaffirmed TEF's dedication to empowering young Africans:

"The private sector, particularly young entrepreneurs, is the engine of Africa's transformation. The Tony Elumelu Foundation will continue to provide Africa's youth with mentorship, resources, and networks to build sustainable businesses through our partnership with UNICEF's Generation Unlimited."

With GenU now institutionalised under the Office of the Vice-President of Nigeria, the initiative is poised to scale even further — targeting 20 million young Nigerians by 2030.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT THE HEART OF YOUTH PROSPERITY

GenU's strategy aligns with TEF's core belief: entrepreneurship unlocks prosperity. As the programme enters its next phase, we remain committed to:

- Expanding digital access
- Strengthening entrepreneurship pathways
- Financing youth-led innovation
- Supporting climate action and green opportunities through youth leadership

This recognition reinforces TEF's position as the continent's leading champion of youth entrepreneurship and a committed partner in shaping a future where African youth are empowered, equipped, and unstoppable.

<https://guardian.ng/news/unicef-genu-9ja-impacts-11-million-youth/>

Women Leading the Green Economy — Global Media Spotlight on the Launch of the Second Cohort of IYBA-WE4A



International media continues to spotlight the Tony Elumelu Foundation's leadership in advancing gender equity and sustainable development across Africa. In a recent feature, regional news outlet Web Infos TV (Senegal) highlighted the Foundation's launch of the second cohort of the IYBA-WE4A Programme — a landmark initiative empowering African women to build and scale green and eco-friendly businesses.

This coverage reflects a growing global recognition: Africa's green transition will be powered by African women, and TEF is at

the forefront of equipping them to lead.

The report emphasised the scale and ambition of the programme, delivered in partnership with:

- European Union
- The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)

The initiative provides:

- US \$5,000 in seed capital
- Leadership and entrepreneurship training
- Specialised support in green and circular economy sectors
- Access to networks, mentorship, and business development pathways

Women from Senegal and seven other African countries are invited to apply — including innovators at the idea stage, ensuring no visionary woman is left behind.

Speaking at the Dakar session, GIZ Technical Advisor Mame Fatou Ndiaye reiterated the strategic importance of the programme:

"The goal is to strengthen the economic empowerment of Senegalese women in green and eco-friendly sectors... breaking down barriers and unlocking their potential."

The media feature underscored that the initiative goes beyond funding — it provides skills, networks, market access, and a launchpad for women to transform the continent's most urgent environmental and economic challenges into opportunity.

As highlighted in the coverage, the Dakar workshop exemplifies TEF's mission to

democratise opportunity and empower Africans to build Africa's future. It represents more than one cohort — it is an unfolding movement, a new era of women-led sustainability, and a visible demonstration of Africapitalism in practice.

Through this collaboration, African women entrepreneurs are not only participating in the green economy — they are shaping and leading it.

The world is watching — and recognising — the catalytic role TEF plays in nurturing a generation of African founders who will define the continent's climate and economic trajectory.





From a Living Room in Lagos to a National Education Movement — TEF Alum Soji Megbowon Featured for Transforming Youth Access to Digital Skills

The impact of Tony Elumelu Foundation entrepreneurs continues to echo across the continent, this time highlighted in a feature on Angels Magazine, profiling 2017 TEF Alum, Soji Megbowon, an educator and trailblazer redefining access to digital and STEM education for underserved youth in Nigeria.

What began in his living room has grown into a transformative movement. Through the

Teenpreneurs Educational Foundation, Soji is equipping thousands of young Nigerians especially out-of-school teenagers with digital literacy, STEM capabilities, and real entrepreneurial skills.

His mission is rooted in his lived experience: raised in underserved communities, he witnessed first-hand the barriers that limit young people's potential. With Tony Elumelu Foundation mentorship and seed capital, he turned a vision into a platform that now serves as a lifeline for youth across Lagos and beyond. Soji's work directly addresses one of the most urgent crises in Africa, the exclusion of over 20 million Nigerian children from formal education. Today, his Foundation has:

- Trained over 5,000 young people in STEM and digital innovation
- Provided 500+ coding scholarships for out-of-school youth
- Helped students secure over \$2 million in international scholarships
- Supported young innovators to win 150+ awards globally

- Enabled students to pitch to global leaders, including Bill Gates and Antony Blinken
- Built community innovation hubs that foster leadership, creativity, and problem-solving

His journey perfectly illustrates TEF's belief: when you empower one African entrepreneur, you create exponential impact.

The feature underscores a powerful truth, African development will be driven by Africa's youth, equipped with 21st-century skills and empowered by visionaries who understand their realities.

As Soji shared, early skepticism from his community evolved into strong support and partnerships including backing from the Tony Elumelu Foundation, propelling his mission and credibility.

From a modest neighbourhood hub to a recognised force in youth empowerment, he represents the transformational pathway TEF champions: local innovation, global relevance, lasting impact.

A BEACON FOR AFRICA'S NEXT GENERATION

What Soji has achieved is not charity it is entrepreneurship at its highest purpose: identifying a problem, building a solution, scaling impact, and unlocking human potential.

His success is a reminder of why TEF exists, and why continued investment in African entrepreneurs is essential to the continent's future. This is TEF Impact. This is Africapitalism in action.

Empowering Women to Lead Africa's Green Economy — WE4A Launch in Kenya Receives National Spotlight



The momentum behind the Women Entrepreneurship for Africa (IYBA-WE4A) programme continues to build, as Kenyan media spotlighted the official launch of the initiative — a catalytic intervention designed to equip women across eight African countries with the capital, training, and networks needed to thrive in the green and impact economy.

With over 1,000 women entrepreneurs set to benefit, the WE4A programme marks a bold step toward redefining women-led entrepreneurship in Sub-Saharan Africa. Supported by the European Union, the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), and Germany's BMZ, and implemented by the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF), GIZ, this initiative stands as a landmark advancement for inclusive growth and sustainable enterprise.



GREEN INNOVATION AT THE CENTRE OF ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

The feature highlighted the programme's mission not simply to provide capital, but to build resilient, globally competitive women-led enterprises in the green economy. Through a structured journey encompassing:

- Training & masterclasses
- Mentorship
- Business strategy development
- Pitch-building
- USD \$5,000 non-repayable seed capital

The programme ensures women are equipped to compete, scale, and lead. Beyond seed funding, WE4A links

entrepreneurs to larger investment pathways — from equity to blended finance — ensuring long-term sustainability and growth.

With targeted support across Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Togo, and Cameroon, WE4A empowers women to create jobs, strengthen communities, and advance the Sustainable Development Goals — particularly gender equality, climate action, and decent work.

Speaking during the Nairobi workshop, Oniye Okolo, Policy & Partnerships Officer at TEF, reinforced the Foundation's mission:

"The Tony Elumelu Foundation is the foremost philanthropic institution driving entrepreneurship across all 54 African countries. Anchored on Africapitalism, we believe Africans hold the power to transform the continent."

Her message echoes TEF's guiding vision — African solutions for African challenges, powered by its entrepreneurs.

REAL STORIES. REAL TRANSFORMATION.

Media coverage also spotlighted Maureen Amakabane, Founder of Nyayo Soko Moms and TEF Alumni Hub Lead (Kenya), who shared her growth journey:

"The support I received through the grant enabled significant growth of my online marketplace for women."

Her testimony affirms what WE4A represents — confidence capital, market access, network elevation, and empowerment at scale.

The report further highlighted TEF's sustained

contribution to Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystem:

- 2.5 million young African entrepreneurs trained
- 24,000 entrepreneurs selected for funding
- 1,292 Kenyan beneficiaries directly supported to date

This footprint reinforces TEF's continental leadership and long-term commitment to empowering the builders of Africa's future.

WE4A goes beyond funding. It equips women with the capital, skills, networks, and visibility to turn bold ideas into sustainable engines of growth and impact.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Startups That Stick: Why Tony Elumelu Foundation-Backed Businesses Survive the First Three Years

Entrepreneurship in Africa is often described as a high-wire act: bold, necessary, but perilously unstable.

The numbers bear this out. Across the continent, 70–95% of businesses fail within their first five years, with some studies placing the average failure rate above 50% in just the first three. In Nigeria alone, up to 80% of businesses collapse within five years, most citing inadequate capital, poor



management, and lack of market access as the reasons for failure. Yet, amid these grim statistics, one programme consistently bends the curve: the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) Entrepreneurship Programme. Since 2015, TEF has trained over 2.5 million entrepreneurs digitally via TEFConnect,

directly funded more than 24,000 founders across 54 countries, and collectively helped them create 1.5 million jobs. Beyond these numbers lies a critical insight: TEF-backed businesses are significantly more likely to survive — and thrive — than the continental average.

Survival Rates: Tony Elumelu Foundation vs. the Continental Norm

Metric	General African Businesses	TEF-Supported Businesses
Survival rate	70–95% fail within 1–5 years; average failure rate >50%	66% survival rate for startups/MSMEs; 91% of funded entrepreneurs still own their original business (TEF Impact Report 2022)
Job creation	Over 95% of African youth work in “vulnerable employment” in the informal sector	1.5+ million jobs created (direct + indirect); 165% increase in jobs within six months of funding
Revenue generation	SMEs struggle due to infrastructure deficits, volatility, and low demand	\$4.2 billion in collective revenue generated since 2015; 48% increase in revenue within six months post-funding

Metric	General African Businesses	TEF-Supported Businesses
Business formalisation	87% of micro-businesses in Africa remain informal	TEF training encourages formalisation, enabling scale and sustainability
Access to funding	\$5.2 trillion MSME financing gap in developing markets (IFC)	\$100 million disbursed in direct seed funding since 2015; TEF entrepreneurs also secure follow-on funding

These figures confirm what alumni repeatedly say: The Tony Elumelu Foundation is not just handing out capital, it is systematically de-risking African startups.

WHY TONY ELUMELU FOUNDATION BUSINESSES STICK

Three interlocking features explain TEF's stronger outcomes:

Training Before Capital

Every entrepreneur completes a 12-week Business Management training covering financial literacy, business planning, marketing, and digital skills. This capacity-building directly addresses the managerial weaknesses that sink most startups.

Structured Support Ecosystem

Entrepreneurs join TEFConnect, the continent's largest digital entrepreneurship ecosystem, enabling them to network, learn, and collaborate across borders. This combats the isolation that leaves many African founders vulnerable.

Access to Capital and Markets

Unlike many who rely solely on savings or informal loans, Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurs receive a non-refundable \$5,000 seed capital and mentoring. More importantly, TEF Alumni gain access to markets and visibility that transform them from small, local operators into investment-ready ventures.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR AFRICA'S ENTREPRENEURIAL LANDSCAPE

The contrast is stark: while most African

SMEs struggle to break even, TEF-backed businesses show consistent revenue growth (40% annually on average) and higher job multipliers (13 jobs per entrepreneur). Employees of TEF alumni also earn three times the national per capita income, showing that resilience translates into tangible household-level uplift.

For entrepreneurs, survival requires more than grit; it requires structured support. For investors and policymakers, TEF's model proves that combining finance with training and mentorship, is not charity but a pragmatic strategy for reducing early-stage risk.

DEFYING THE ODDS

The data could not be clearer. Across Africa, most startups will fail before they mature, stalling both economic growth and investor confidence. But the Tony Elumelu Foundation has proven that failure is not inevitable. With a structured ecosystem of funding, training, and networks, TEF has effectively rewritten the survival odds, producing cohorts of entrepreneurs more likely to endure, scale, and multiply impact. In a continent poised to host the world's largest working-age population by 2035, the difference between economic stagnation and prosperity lies in whether these startups stick.

The lesson for Africa's leaders, donors, and investors is unambiguous: resilience can be engineered and TEF has built the blueprint.

Inside BeGreen Africa: Designing Youth-First Climate Solutions That Scale



Climate change is often framed in abstract terms of carbon targets, global treaties, and distant deadlines. But for Africa's young people, the climate crisis is lived daily: failed harvests, unpredictable weather, waste piling up in cities, and a scarcity of green jobs. What they need are not just speeches about the future, but practical entry points into it.

That is the thinking behind BeGreen Africa, a partnership between the Tony Elumelu Foundation, UNICEF's Generation Unlimited (GenU), and the IKEA Foundation. The initiative is more than a climate programme. It is an experiment in how to design youth-first solutions that combine training, entrepreneurship, and market linkages in a way that feels relevant to the lives of young Africans today.

WHY YOUTH-FIRST MATTERS

Most climate interventions treat young people as volunteers or beneficiaries, not as builders of solutions. BeGreen Africa flips this. It trains young Africans to become green entrepreneurs, not only absorbing skills but also creating livelihoods in recycling, clean energy, and sustainable agriculture.

The pedagogy is hands-on and entrepreneurial by design: instead of top-down lectures, participants learn by building prototypes, pitching businesses, and linking to markets from day one.

This matters because Africa's youth bulge is an opportunity. By 2030, the continent will have the largest working-age population in the world. Without jobs, frustration rises. With the right support, those same young people could lead Africa's green transformation.

BEYOND THE NONPROFIT MODEL

BeGreen Africa's design is intentionally different from traditional non-profit programmes. Three elements stand out:

Pedagogy rooted in entrepreneurship

Training goes beyond technical climate knowledge to include financial literacy, customer discovery, and digital tools. This ensures participants leave not only with awareness, but with businesses ready to operate.

Market linkages baked in

Graduates are not left to fend for themselves. BeGreen Africa actively connects youth ventures to buyers, investors, and suppliers. For example, Christopher Subano, a young Kenyan entrepreneur funded by the Tony Elumelu Foundation in 2019, is tackling Africa's e-waste crisis through his social enterprise, Green Inclusive Business. By refurbishing non-functional electronics like computers and printers, he transforms waste into usable products, effectively linking



discarded technology with those who can utilise refurbished devices. This closes the loop between waste management and access to electronics, promoting sustainability and resource efficiency.

Scalability through networks

TEFConnect, the digital hub of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, allows training, mentorship, and funding opportunities to scale far beyond in-person workshops. This creates a pipeline of entrepreneurs across geographies, not just in pilot locations.

DESIGNING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

At its heart, BeGreen Africa is not about isolated success stories. It is about system design: how to turn youth energy into green economic pathways that scale.

- For governments, it demonstrates that climate policy can double as job-creation policy.
- For funders, it offers a tested way to de-risk youth ventures before larger capital flows in.
- For communities, it shows how waste, energy, and agriculture challenges can be solved locally, by people who live them every day.

This is not philanthropy as usual. It is African youths building the scaffolding for Africa's green economy from the bottom up.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The BeGreen Africa Programme is still young, but its early pilots already point to what works: combining climate action with economic agency. As funders and policymakers search for models that deliver both impact and scale, the BeGreen experiment deserves close attention.

Because in the end, the question is not whether young Africans care about climate change. The question is whether the world is ready to back them with the tools, markets, and capital they need to turn that care into companies, jobs, and lasting change.



Nigeria at 65: Building Economic Independence Through Entrepreneurs

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria gained political independence, reclaiming its sovereignty and the right to shape its own destiny. Sixty-five years on, the question remains: has this freedom translated into economic independence for its people? Increasingly, the answer is found not in oil exports or state budgets, but in the drive and ingenuity of Nigerian entrepreneurs.

At the forefront of this transformation is the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF), Africa's leading philanthropy, committed to empowering a new generation of entrepreneurs. Through its flagship Entrepreneurship Programme, TEF has equipped thousands of Nigerians with the training, seed capital, and

networks needed to transform ambition into achievement, catalysing both livelihoods and national resilience.

FROM OIL WEALTH TO HUMAN CAPITAL

Nigeria's economic narrative has long been tethered to oil. But volatility in global markets has shown that the country's greatest resource is not beneath the ground, but in its people. With a median age of just 18, Nigeria's economic independence depends on investing in human capital, its innovators, creators, and job-makers.

As our founder, Tony Elumelu, rightly says *"I have come to understand that the most important thing I can do to advance our development is to help replicate my success in others and to evangelise the cause of entrepreneurship."*

THE NUMBERS BEHIND THE IMPACT

Since 2015, TEF has trained thousands of young Africans on our proprietary digital hub, TEFConnect, and disbursed millions in direct funding. For Nigeria, the results are striking:

- TEF-backed entrepreneurs create 13 jobs on average in their active businesses.
- Their employees earn three times the national per capita income.
- Over 80% of TEF entrepreneurs generate revenue, with turnover growing by up to 40%.
- Profits average 22 times the national income per capita.
- 64% of alumni support broader value chains, multiplying the economic benefits across communities.

These are not just statistics; they are a measure of lives transformed, households sustained, and communities empowered.

STORIES OF INDEPENDENCE IN ACTION

The numbers come alive in the stories of Nigerian alumni who are building businesses that solve real problems.

Dare Odumade, 2019 TEF Alumni, co-founder of Chekkit Technologies, a blockchain-powered company fighting counterfeit drugs. Nigeria loses thousands of lives annually to fake pharmaceuticals. Chekkit's solution — simple verification via mobile — has protected over a million consumers and created pathways for a safer healthcare system. Dare's work demonstrates how entrepreneurship can directly address systemic challenges and save lives.

Bilikiss Adebisi-Abiola, 2012 TEF Alumni, founder Wecyclers. What began as a recycling start-up has grown into a thriving social enterprise, recently expanding through seven new franchisees. Wecyclers tackles Lagos's waste crisis while creating jobs and promoting sustainability, proving that circular economy models can thrive in Nigeria. Both Dare and Bilikiss exemplify the philosophy of Africapitalism: businesses that

generate profit while solving pressing social issues.

FROM INDEPENDENCE TO INTERDEPENDENCE

At 65, Nigeria's independence story is evolving. Sovereignty today is not only political, but also economic. Entrepreneurs are building the structures of resilience: food security, financial access, clean energy, health innovation, and digital inclusion.

As our founder reminds us:

"Today we may appear young, and people may not believe in us, but we are going to compel them to believe in us through our achievement."

This belief underpins TEF's work. By supporting entrepreneurs across sectors, the Foundation is ensuring that Nigerians are not only participants in their economy but leaders shaping its direction.

THE INDEPENDENCE DIVIDEND

Nigeria's next chapter will not be written by oil rigs or foreign loans but by the ingenuity of its people. The Tony Elumelu Foundation's Entrepreneurship Programme shows that independence is sustained when citizens create, innovate, and employ.

At 65, Nigeria is poised to translate its demographic promise into an economic dividend. With entrepreneurs like Dare Odumade and Bilikiss Adebisi-Abiola leading the charge, true economic independence is no longer aspirational; it is unfolding every day, built by Nigerians, for Nigerians.

Happy Independence Nigeria.



Africa-First Procurement: How the Tony Elumelu Foundation Is Redefining Venture Pipelines

Global corporations are under growing pressure to diversify supply chains and deliver measurable social impacts. Meanwhile, African entrepreneurs are producing solutions that are bold, market-ready, and deeply attuned to local realities. The problem is not innovation; it is access. Corporate procurement systems are often built for legacy suppliers, leaving new and agile ventures shut out before they even have a chance.

The Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) has spent the last decade closing that gap. By funding, training, and mentoring more than 2.5 million young Africans with digital training via TEFConnect, the Foundation has created

exactly what global companies claim they need: a reliable, de-risked pipeline of suppliers who combine commercial viability with social impact.

WHY AFRICA MATTERS FOR CORPORATE PROCUREMENT

The case for an Africa-first sourcing strategy goes far beyond corporate social responsibility:

Risk diversification: The pandemic and recent geopolitical shocks have highlighted the dangers of over-reliance on a few supply hubs. Africa's regional spread offers resilience against global disruption.

ESG alignment: African ventures are already innovating in sustainability. From waste recycling into construction materials to solar-powered energy access, partnerships here directly advance environmental, social, and governance metrics.

Market insight: Africa's unique conditions have generated hyper-local innovations — in logistics, agritech, and fintech — that global corporates can integrate for competitive advantage.

Growth frontier: Integrating African suppliers isn't just about sourcing; it builds brand loyalty and local trust in some of the world's fastest-growing consumer markets.

FROM SEED SUPPORT TO SCALABLE SUPPLIER

TEF's approach goes beyond seed funding. Alumni are trained to meet the governance, reporting, and operational standards that corporates expect. This transforms what was once a scattered field of ventures into a structured pipeline. Corporations do not need to start from scratch; they can engage directly with TEF-prepared businesses that are already demonstrating traction.

A CASE IN POINT: EXPENDO MOBILITY

Michael Wambugu, a 2019 TEF beneficiary from Kenya, founded Expendo Mobility, a Nairobi-based company supporting the continent's transport gig economy. His venture provides financial and health solutions to boda boda riders, couriers, and other mobility workers who form the backbone of Africa's logistics networks.

Through Expendo Mobility, riders gain access to:

- Discounted consumables such as fuel, lubricants, and spare parts to reduce operating costs.
- Affordable microinsurance products like "Hosi Bill," which covers medical expenses.
- Embedded finance solutions, integrated with SACCOs, to simplify deposits, withdrawals, and credit.
- Reliable vehicle servicing, ensuring safety and productivity on the road.

With TEF's training and seed funding, Michael was able to formalise his model, build market traction, and position Expendo as a scalable

partner for corporates reliant on last-mile logistics. For procurement teams, this is not simply a small vendor; it is a company providing efficiency, resilience, and impact within a sector that underpins supply chains across Africa.

THE BROADER PICTURE

Expendo Mobility is one of thousands of stories across the TEF network. From food processing ventures in Nigeria to clean water solutions in South Africa, TEF alumni are proving that the continent has both the talent and the discipline to deliver at scale. Each venture represents not just an individual success, but also a piece of a larger puzzle: the construction of an Africa-first venture pipeline.

CONCLUSION

Corporate leaders have long spoken of the need for more inclusive supply chains. The Tony Elumelu Foundation has already built the bridge. Its alumni are trained, vetted, and impact driven. For companies serious about diversifying procurement and tapping into Africa's growth, the answer is not to wonder where the partners are. They exist. They are TEF entrepreneurs.

The pipeline is ready. The next step is corporate action.



Money That Works: Cultivating Financial Discipline as an Entrepreneur

Let us be candid, financial management is rarely glamorous. It involves spreadsheets, incremental progress, and the discipline to decline expenditures that project affluence but undermine sustainability.

For African entrepreneurs, however, it is not merely a best practice; it is a lifeline. Across 54 countries, founders rise each day to pursue payments, negotiate with suppliers, and navigate escalating operational costs. This is precisely why the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) does more than provide funding; it instils financial discipline. In today's economic climate, passion alone is insufficient. One must understand their numbers.

WHY DISCIPLINE SURPASSES CAPITAL

Most businesses do not fail due to a lack of opportunity, but rather because the founder often loses financial control. If you cannot account for your last penny, you are not running a business; you are gambling.

At the Tony Elumelu Foundation, funding is not positioned as a reward, but as a responsibility. The \$5,000 seed capital is a tool, one that must be wielded with care and competence.

Our results speak volumes: 91% of TEF-funded entrepreneurs remain operational years after receiving support — more than double the average survival rate for African start-ups. The differentiator? Financial discipline. Not fortune. Not chance.

THREE PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Master Your Cash Flow

Money does not vanish; it escapes through unmonitored channels. Track every transaction. Maintain distinct accounts for

business and personal finances. Anticipate lean periods. Understand what is entering, what is exiting, and when. If you can manage N100, you can manage N100,000. The habits are the same, only the commas change.

Spend with Purpose

Not every “business expense” constitutes an investment. A new laptop? Perhaps. A flashy billboard? Unlikely. The TEF principle is straightforward: every expenditure must contribute to profitability or operational efficiency. Adopt the mindset of a Chief Financial Officer, not a consumer.

Reinvest Strategically

Profit is not for indulgence; it is for growth (you can print this on a shirt). The most successful TEF entrepreneurs do not wait for external investors; they become their own. Each month, they allocate funds to reinvest in inventory, personnel, or systems, ensuring their capital continues to work, even when they are not.

CONTEXTUALISING FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE IN AFRICA

African entrepreneurs often operate amidst volatility: Unpredictable currencies. Intermittent electricity. Predominantly cash-based transactions. TEF's financial training is therefore grounded in practicality, not theory.

Entrepreneurs are equipped to:

- Utilise mobile money platforms for transaction tracking
- Generate digital receipts to build trust
- Leverage free tools such as Flutterwave, Paystack, or QuickBooks Starter

No jargon. Just actionable habits that safeguard solvency in uncertain markets.

DISCIPLINE: THE ENTREPRENEUR'S SUPERPOWER

Financial management transcends arithmetic; it is a mindset. It is the resolve to say: *“I will pay myself last because the business must come first.”* It is the commitment to save 10%, regardless of how modest the income. It is the understanding that sustainable success is built on structure, not serendipity.

Our Founder, Tony O. Elumelu, CFR, encapsulates this ethos in his philosophy of Africapitalism, the firm conviction that economic prosperity and social wealth creation must go hand in hand. Like he says, “I’ve come to understand that the most important thing I can do is help replicate my success in others.” That replication begins with one core behaviour: discipline.

THE EVIDENCE SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

Since 2015, TEF has selected more than 24,000 entrepreneurs across the African continent to receive over \$100 million in seed capital. Collectively, these entrepreneurs have generated over \$4.2 billion in revenue and created 1.5 million jobs.

These are not anomalies, they are the outcomes of consistent, disciplined practices:

- Diligently tracking every transaction
- Strategically planning every expenditure
- Reinventing operations before resources are depleted

This is how small enterprises evolve into sustainable businesses and how TEF entrepreneurs consistently outperform their peers.

BEGIN YOUR FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE JOURNEY TODAY

If there is one takeaway from this article, let it be this: Money does not respond to passion; it responds to process.

Start now:

- Review your expenses from the past 30 days.
- Establish a dedicated business account, no exceptions.
- Set aside one day each month for financial reflection.

You need not be an accountant, only accountable. And if you are ready to learn how, begin where over 2.5 million others have — on TEFConnect. The platform is free. The lessons are practical. The impact is measurable. Because ultimately, financial discipline is not a limitation; it is the freedom to build the business you envision.

Managing Cash Flow in a Seasonal Business: An African Founder's Survival Guide



Across Africa, small businesses are the heartbeat of local economies; yet many of them pulse irregularly.

Agriculture peaks at harvest; tourism booms in the dry months; fashion and retail experience a surge around December, then slow to a crawl.

For founders in seasonal industries, it's not competition that kills the business; it's cash droughts between harvests and holidays.

The Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) has worked with thousands of entrepreneurs who have weathered this cycle. From our impact reports and alumni data, one message is clear: the businesses that survive the seasons are the ones that plan for it.

RECOGNISE YOUR BUSINESS RHYTHM

Every business has a pattern. Know yours. A vegetable farmer in Benue State knows income peaks after harvest; a beach resort

in Mombasa earns most between June and September. Mapping those highs and lows is step one in taking control. Founders often make the fatal error of assuming steady revenue and spreading expenses evenly across the year. Life experience shows that successful entrepreneurs instead forecast unevenly, saving aggressively in the good months and stretching wisely in the lean ones. Ask yourself:

- When does cash truly come in?
- When do big costs hit?
- How long is the gap between income waves?

Answering these honestly can reveal whether your business needs growth — or simply better rhythm.

SEPARATE PROFITS FROM CASH

African entrepreneurs frequently conflate sales with cash in hand. A full order book isn't liquidity until invoices clear. A TEF impact survey revealed that over 40% of failed small businesses across the continent ran out of cash despite being profitable on paper. The fix is not complicated:

- Track inflows daily, not monthly.
- Build a cash reserve covering at least two months of fixed costs.
- Delay non-essential purchases until after cash lands.

Revenue is applause; cash flow is oxygen.

BUDGET FOR THE DRY SEASON WHILE IT'S STILL RAINING

In Africa, markets depend heavily on climate, logistics, and sometimes festivals; volatility is normal, it is not a crisis. TEF's financial model encourages what it calls a "counter-

seasonal reserve": setting aside a portion of revenue during peak months to fund operations when sales dip. For example, a Kenyan flower exporter earning \$10,000 monthly from December to March might allocate 20% each month to a separate holding account. By April, when orders fall, she has a cushion to cover staff, utilities, and transport. This habit — saving in rhythm with your market — turns seasonality from a threat into a competitive advantage.

DIVERSIFY, BUT STAY COHERENT

Seasonal businesses don't have to sit idle in quiet months. The most resilient businesses pivot within their ecosystem:

- A Ghanaian cocoa farmer opens a side venture selling organic fertiliser.
- A Senegalese surf instructor runs virtual wellness classes in the off-season.
- A Nigerian event caterer offers meal prep services between festivals.

Diversification only works when it complements your core business; it should use the same skills, networks, or assets, not distract from them.

MASTER CREDIT RELATIONSHIPS BEFORE YOU NEED THEM

When cash runs low, desperation debt can destroy you. Instead, build credit relationships early, when you don't need them. This could mean:

- Negotiating supplier credit lines during peak periods.
- Partnering with cooperatives or local microfinance institutions that understand seasonal cycles.
- Maintaining a transparent transaction history to earn trust.

TEF entrepreneurs are trained to see finance not as a rescue, but as a relationship, one that must be cultivated long before the storm.

KEEP COSTS FLEXIBLE, NOT FIXED

In a seasonal economy, rigid costs sink agile businesses. Rent, payroll, and logistics should be structured to flex with your income.

This is where creativity counts:

- Hire part-time or commission-based staff during low-volume months.
- Share storage or production facilities with complementary businesses.
- Automate what you can; subscription tools are easier to pause than full-time salaries.

TEF's 66% survival rate among supported entrepreneurs is partly due to this lean-thinking mindset: scale when you can, slim when you must.

INVEST IN VISIBILITY DURING THE LULL

Ironically, your quiet months are the best time to strengthen your brand. While competitors hibernate, use downtime for marketing, training, and product development.

This approach mirrors TEF's philosophy of continuous learning: even in slow periods, founders are encouraged to leverage TEFConnect, the Foundation's proprietary digital platform, to take new courses, connect with mentors, or redesign business models.

Preparation in the dry spell powers acceleration when the season turns.

BUILD PREDICTABILITY WITH DATA

You can't manage what you don't measure.

Digital tools like Zoho Books, QuickBooks, or local fintech dashboards (e.g., Kippa) help track inflows, expenses, and receivables, even with limited bandwidth or banking access.

Utilise tools that provide analytics that allow entrepreneurs to visualise performance and plan. Over time, those data patterns become your most valuable forecast instrument.

Like our founder, Tony O. Elumelu, CFR, aptly puts it *"Economic prosperity and social wealth must go hand in hand for maximum impact."*

That impact begins with founders who treat cash flow as the bloodstream of their enterprise, not an afterthought.

So, whether you're a mango exporter in Mali or a boutique owner in Accra, the rule is the same:

Plan your flow before the tide changes. Because the season will always turn. What matters is whether you're ready when it does.



ALUMNI & MENTOR SPOTLIGHT



At the Tony Elumelu Foundation, impact is not just measured in numbers, it is felt in the stories of bold Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurs and passionate TEF mentors who are transforming Africa, one business at a time.

In this edition of TEFCircle, we shine a spotlight on some of our alumni and mentors

who are not only building thriving ventures but also embodying the spirit of Africapitalism by creating jobs, uplifting communities, and rewriting Africa's narrative through entrepreneurship.



Rokiatou Traoré
2020 TEF Alumni, Mali

Some entrepreneurs build businesses. Others build movements. Rokiatou Traoré does both. 2020 Tony Elumelu entrepreneur and the Founder of Herou Alliance, Rokiatou

embodies the spirit of transformation that defines the Tony Elumelu Foundation's goal - turning adversity into innovation, and purpose into prosperity. Her entrepreneurial journey began in one of the most challenging moments of her life.

Just months after applying to the Tony Elumelu Foundation Entrepreneurship Programme, she lost her husband while three months pregnant. Many would have paused their dreams. Rokiatou chose to rise — supported by her mentor, who encouraged her to continue, believe, and build. With the US \$5,000 seed capital from TEF, she planted the roots of a business and a movement. Today, Herou Alliance stands as a beacon of climate resilience and women's economic empowerment in Mali.

IMPACT IN MOTION

Herou Alliance is transforming land,

livelihoods, and the future of Mali's green economy through an inclusive moringa value chain that integrates rural women and youth. What began as seed capital has grown into scalable, measurable impact:

- USD \$200,000 in additional funding raised
- 150,000 trees planted, restoring degraded land
- 2,000 women and young farmers trained in agroforestry and sustainable agriculture

From producing moringa powder and tea to restoring fragile ecosystems, Herou Alliance is proving that climate action and economic empowerment are not parallel goals — they are inseparable.

Rokiatou is not only building a business; she is shaping global climate discourse. She has earned recognition as:

- A UNCCD Land Hero
- A climate negotiator
- An advocate for community-led climate solutions across the Sahel

Her story is a reminder of TEF's core belief of Africapitalism: Empower one entrepreneur, and you ignite transformation for thousands.

Through resilience, vision, and community, Rokiatou Traoré is regenerating land, restoring dignity, and redefining what is possible when African women lead.



Fatma Ezzahra Maatoug

2021 TEF Alumni, Tunisia

Entrepreneurship is not merely the creation of enterprise; it is the creation of opportunity.

Few stories illustrate this truth more vividly than that of Fatma Ezzahra Maatoug, a 2021 Tony Elumelu Foundation alumna from Tunisia and Co-Founder of Artalk.

Armed with conviction and a vision to uplift artisans, Fatma used her US \$5,000 TEF seed capital to launch a platform that would transform lives and preserve cultural heritage. Artalk began as a grassroots community — a space where Tunisian handicraft creators could gather, learn, and grow. With TEF support, it evolved into a full digital marketplace and training hub that empowered over 400 local artisans with business education, market access, and the tools to earn sustainable income.

"It was the first push... the first grant we received. And after that came more," Fatma shared. "We were able to empower more than 400 handicraft creators in Tunisia through education and startup opportunities."

Her journey embodies the vision of our Founder, Tony O. Elumelu, CFR: a continent

where empowered entrepreneurs catalyze progress in their communities and across borders. Fatma's entrepreneurial path has been marked by resilience, innovation, and reinvention — qualities shared by many of Africa's most promising young builders. When Artalk later paused operations due to fundraising challenges, she did not slow down. She transitioned into a strategic consulting career, sharpening her business expertise while continuing to champion creative and entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Today, her trajectory has taken her to the global stage. As a Fulbright Scholar pursuing a Master's degree in Entrepreneurship & Innovation in San Francisco, Fatma is acquiring the skills, network, and global perspective to scale even greater impact across Tunisia and beyond.

Her journey is a powerful reminder that entrepreneurship is not linear — it evolves, pivots, and expands. And with the right foundation, vision carries forward.

Fatma's story reaffirms the mission of the Tony Elumelu Foundation: to empower, uplift, and inspire the next generation of African leaders. What began as seed funding has blossomed into international leadership, ecosystem influence, and a renewed commitment to uplift local creators.

We celebrate Fatma for her determination, her passion for Tunisian craftsmanship, and her dedication to building equitable opportunity through creativity and commerce. She continues to represent the best of African talent on the world stage, and we look forward to the future she is shaping.



Yachaou Mamane

2021 TEF Alumni, Niger

Entrepreneurship in Africa wears many faces, and some of the most transformative belong to those who build not only businesses, but stronger societies.

Yachaou Mamane, a 2021 Tony Elumelu Foundation alumnus from Niger and Founder of ONG RECUP, stands at this intersection of enterprise, environment, and peacebuilding. His work exemplifies a powerful truth: when African changemakers are equipped with seed capital, belief, and opportunity, they do not simply launch ventures, they uplift communities and safeguard futures.

ONG RECUP an acronym for Recovery, Education, Culture, Urban, and Environmental Protection began with a focus on recycling and environmental stewardship. Under Yachaou's leadership, it has grown into a multidimensional force for stability, opportunity, and hope.

With the US \$5,000 TEF seed capital, Yachaou expanded the organisation's capabilities, integrating digital tools and artificial intelligence to scale impact, support youth, and advance climate and peace initiatives across Niger.

"Thank you so much, Mr. Tony Elumelu, for providing us seed grant... Now we are integrating digital technology, especially AI, in our work."

— Yachaou Mamane, TEF 2021 Alumnus, Niger

ONGRECUP today sits at the forefront of some of the most critical challenges in the Sahel — youth unemployment, climate vulnerability, and the threat of violent extremism. Through education, dialogue, and entrepreneurship support, the organisation:

- Champions youth empowerment and employability
- Promotes interreligious and intercultural dialogue
- Drives initiatives for peace and conflict prevention
- Leads anti-hate-speech campaigns
- Advances sustainable environmental action

This is entrepreneurship in its highest form, enterprise as a tool for social cohesion, and innovation as a pathway to stability.

Yachaou's leadership extends beyond his organisation. He is recognised as:

- A human rights defender
- A peace and security consultant
- A lecturer in interreligious dialogue at the Islamic University of Niger
- A UNAOC Fellow (2015)
- A member of iDove (Interfaith Dialogue on Violent Extremism)
- A Leaders Africa Fellow (Obama Foundation, 2018)

Fluent in Hausa, French, English, Arabic, and Chinese, and with a Master's degree in Agricultural Economics & Food Security from China Agricultural University, he represents the global African talent driving progress across borders and industries.

AFRICAPITALISM IN ACTION

Yachaou's journey reflects the core of Africapitalism, leveraging private enterprise to create social and economic transformation. From recycling to peacebuilding, from youth empowerment to digital innovation, his work demonstrates how bold vision, when supported, can reshape societies.

We celebrate Yachaou, a builder of opportunity, a defender of peace, and a champion of African resilience. He is proof that when you empower one entrepreneur, you strengthen a nation.

Mentor Spotlight



Lilian Opiyo

Kenya,
Guiding Leaders, Growing Leaders,
Becoming One Again

Mentorship at the Tony Elumelu Foundation is not a one-way street. It is a shared journey, a continuous exchange of learning, humility, and evolution. Few voices capture this spirit more powerfully than Lilian Opiyo, Kenyan leadership expert, transformational coach, and dedicated TEF Mentor.

With over two decades of corporate experience, including 20 years in the aviation sector. Lilian embodies the

resilience and reinvention that define Africa's entrepreneurial story. Leaving the predictability of a corporate career, she stepped boldly into entrepreneurship, founding The Leadershift Group Kenya, a leadership development organisation inspired by her mentorship under global leadership icon Dr John C. Maxwell.

Her mission is simple but profound: transformation begins within. Guided by her mantra, "CHANGE begins with ME," she empowers young women, learners, and aspiring leaders to step into their purpose with courage and clarity. Through coaching, mentorship programmes, and As a TEF



Mentor, she is nurturing a new generation of African leaders grounded in values, vision, and continuous growth.

At the WE4A Kenya Application Drive Workshop, Lilian offered a message that resonated deeply across the room, a reminder that mentorship is not static; it evolves alongside the entrepreneur. Listening to emerging women founders share their journeys, she was inspired to shift perspectives:

"Although I've been given the mic as a mentor, today the mentees have challenged us to start thinking like mentees... perhaps we should start again and see what the next frontier is."

In her honest reflections, she acknowledged what many entrepreneurs know too well, the transition from employment to enterprise is not linear. There are seasons of ease and seasons of stretching. Yet there is strength in community, in process, and in shared growth.

She left the room with a powerful challenge, not just for mentees, but for mentors, too:
"The next frontier is green business. We follow

the process. We walk together. We start again if we must — because that is how we grow."

LEADERSHIP ROOTED IN SERVICE, EMPOWERMENT, AND RENEWAL

Lilian represents the backbone of the TEF mentorship network: leaders who do not simply advise, but listen, evolve, and lead by example. Her commitment ensures that TEF entrepreneurs do not walk alone. They walk with guidance, accountability, wisdom, and mentors prepared to learn alongside them.

Her message is a lesson for all builders:

Leadership is not a destination. It is a journey, one we travel, teach, and relearn together.

We celebrate Lilian for her dedication, her humility, and her unwavering belief in Africa's entrepreneurs. Her voice adds strength to our collective mission: empowering Africans to build a prosperous Africa and ensuring no one climbs alone.

Join the IYBA-WE4A Workshop in Malawi!

Empowering Women in Green Business

Venue:

Lifestyle Boutique Hotel,
Area 42, Lilongwe, Along Chayamba Road and
Dunduzu Street, P.O. Box 31489,
Lilongwe, Malawi

13th November, 2025 | 9:00 AM (CAT)

Connect. Learn. Grow.
Join women entrepreneurs driving
Africa's green transition.



Implemented by:

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



**THE TONY ELUMELU
FOUNDATION**

Join the
IYBA-WE4A
Workshop in Cameroon!

Empowering Women in Green Business

Save the Date

20th November, 2025

Connect. Learn. Grow.
Join women entrepreneurs driving
Africa's green transition.



Implemented by:

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



 THE TONY ELUMELU
FOUNDATION

Join the
IYBA-WE4A
Workshop in Togo!

Empowering Women in Green Business

Save the Date

21st November, 2025

Connect. Learn. Grow.
Join women entrepreneurs driving
Africa's green transition.



Implemented by:

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



 THE TONY ELUMELU
FOUNDATION



www.TEFConnect.com

Applications are
now closed

#BeGreenAfrica initiative

Applications will be reviewed and feedback communicated via email in the coming weeks.

WE ARE HIRING

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Manager

 Lagos, Nigeria (Fully Onsite)

Experience: 7+ years in M&E Research / Development

Sector: NGO - Entrepreneurship,
Financial Inclusion, Policy & Impact

SCAN TO APPLY





THE TONY ELUMELU
FOUNDATION

Partner with us



Become a
TEF Mentor



Learn about
the TEF
Impact



TEF  RCLE

www.tonyelumelufoundation.org

