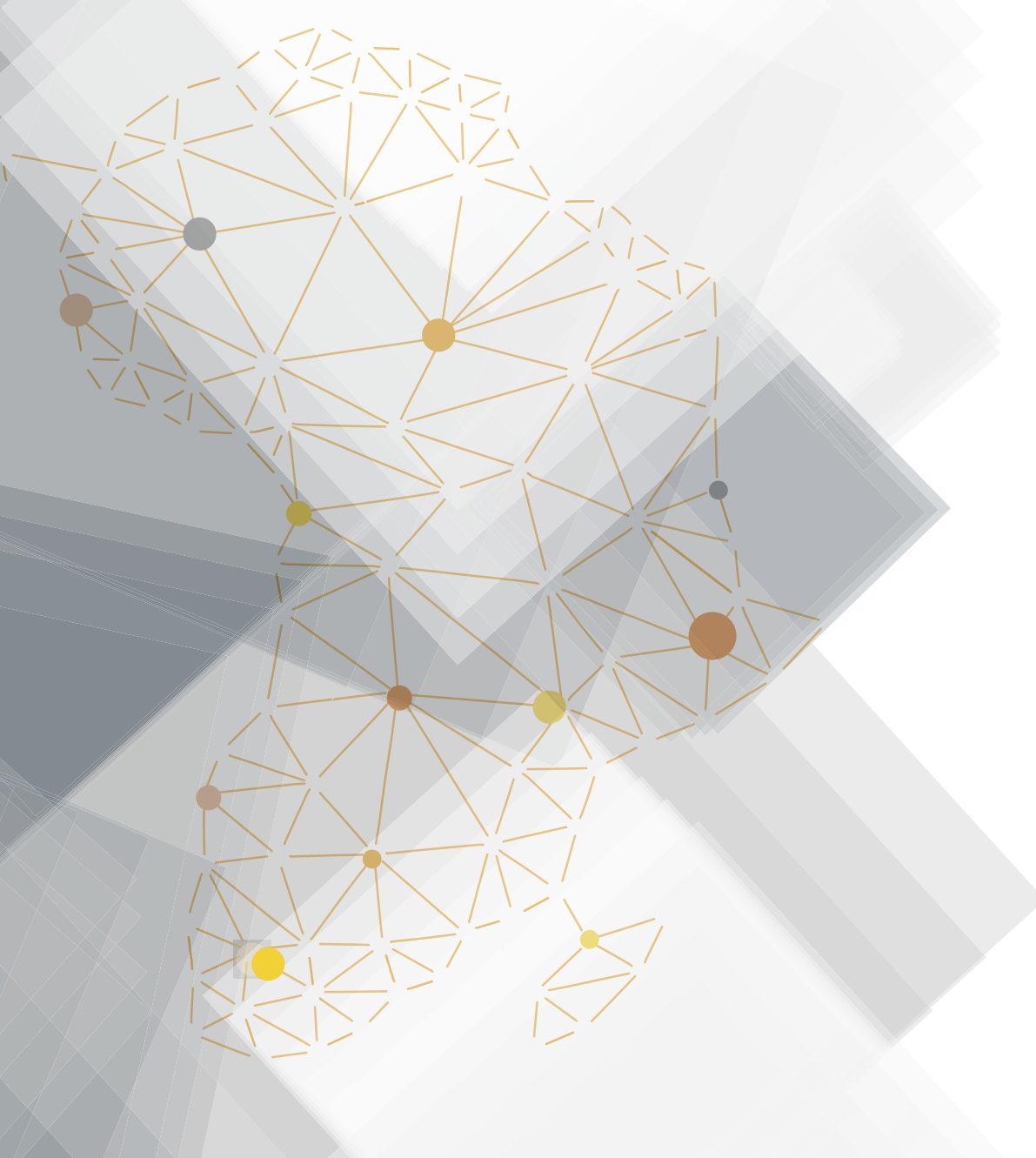




NEXT AFRICA

FEBRUARY 2020 REPORT

Learning Journey to
Silicon Savannah





The Learning Journey

The Fourth Learning Journey to the Silicon Savannah took place in February 2020. The immersive and contextual approach of the journey was aimed at exploring the innovation, entrepreneurship and research opportunities available in Nairobi.

Participants actively engaged with local innovators to foster partnerships and learn about the opportunities in the Silicon Savannah.





DAY
01



APPROACHING

The Innovation Landscape in Kenya

The Learning Journey started at the University of Nairobi's Chiromo campus. Dr. Amollo Ambole, the strategy lead at the Living Lab and a researcher from the University of Nairobi gave a brief introduction of the innovation landscape in Kenya.

Kenya ranks 77th in the global innovation index and 53rd globally in the global competitiveness index.

Africa contributes just 1% of the global research despite having 16% of the world population.

Only 2% of global research publications in 2018 originated from Africa.

Over 60% of innovations in Kenya originate from informal settlements.



Kenyan innovators pitch session

SISITECH LIMITED

Shimanyi Valentino - Founder

Sisitech collaborates with partners to develop long lasting tech solutions. One of their flagship projects tracks the daily school attendance of over 600,000 school going children in 8 counties in Kenya.

Q&A

How do you track the school children?

We use an application that is given to teachers to help in tracking the students.



Technology is a key enabler for all sectors in Kenyan economic development.



In tech innovation, time is everything as it gives a developer the opportunity to develop as many iterations as possible.

BUNIFU TECHNOLOGIES

Wilberforce Seguton - Co-founder

Bunifu framework is an enterprise software development tool. The framework offers tools and bundled software content elements for better and easier software development. Bunifu saves time - improves productivity by cutting down development time by more than half. You can focus on creating more powerful and useful software.

Q&A

How do you create value for the developers?

Giving them pre-developed tools that help them to develop software fast and save on development time.

PATH INTERNATIONAL LIVING LAB

Nelson Cheruiyot, Nairobi

PATH International living lab is focusing on healthcare solutions that serve both the patients and healthcare providers as opposed to traditional solutions that serve the healthcare providers alone.

Q&A

Do you have a follow up process for the healthcare providers?

Yes. PATH International offers end-to-end healthcare (innovation) solutions with follow-up protocols.



We are focused on developing as many solutions as possible and collaborating with as many innovators as possible in healthcare.

KIZOMBA DISTRICT

Ronald Ekesa - Founder and Instructor

Dance is therapy. Ronald elaborated on how dance is a way to relax the mind, and elevates social connection between people. In his work with corporates, he employs dance to improve team productivity, expression and to encourage the building of networks. He gave some powerful examples of their past work and results - and of course there was a practical illustration that got the entire room in sync.

Q&A

How do you integrate social innovation in dance?

We have been impactful in improving the social welfare of people through dance projects and events that bring people from different social settings together.



There is need for more investment in dance both as a hobby and form of therapy for employees and freelance dancers.

OGAKE BRIDAL

Ogake Musomi - Founder and Designer

Ogake briefly spoke about the bridal fashion industry in Kenya.

Q&A

Kenya has many traditional marriages and weddings. Do you produce gowns for traditional weddings?

Yes. We are all about creative designs and customized bridal wear. We are not afraid to think outside the box.



Kenyans are developing a greater interest in trendy products yet they want to save on their bridal wear more than ever... ‘Ogake Bridal’ has come in with customizable bridal wear.

Trivia

Dr. Amollo Ambole's signature trivia session, where winners received gifts: The Austrian participants had to correctly answer

“How many counties are there in Kenya?”

Reception at the Austrian Embassy



Ambassador, Dr. Christian Fellner

The delegation paid a courtesy call to the Austrian embassy where they were received by the Austrian Ambassador to Nairobi, Dr. Christian Fellner. Dr. Christian Fellner addressed the delegates on his experience working in Nairobi and representing Austrian interests in the region. Further he spoke about focus areas and opportunities for Austrian enterprises in Kenya.

Tech Innovation in the Kenyan Informal Sector

LYNK KENYA

Johannes Degn - Co-Founder

Lynk was launched in 2016 to solve the problem of quality in the informal services sector. Lynk has over 1,200 people working for the company (both in-house and contract-based arrangements.) Lynk owns the technology, vets the workers, trains the workers, determines the cost for the services, and undertakes customer service and fulfilment.

Q&A

Why did you choose to invest in Kenya?

It was a chance. I had visited a friend here and looked around. I thought the innovation landscape in Kenya was phenomenal. The decision to invest in Kenya was both one of opportunity to fill a gap and one of risk.

“

Product iteration is key to growth and stability of innovations in the informal sector in Kenya because the market is complex with many dynamics, and Kenyan customers have an eye for quality... We have learned a lot about the market.

”

Sustainable Innovations in Energy

M-KOPA SOLAR SYSTEMS

The delegates toured the M-KOPA campus. M-KOPA has connected over 750,000 homes and businesses to affordable solar power. M-KOPA works with a lean model that enables the business to keep in touch with their customers and offer personalised services.

Sustainable Innovations in Energy

M-KOPA SOLAR
UPGRADE YOUR LIFE

“

Our innovation leverages mobile technology and mobile money.

”

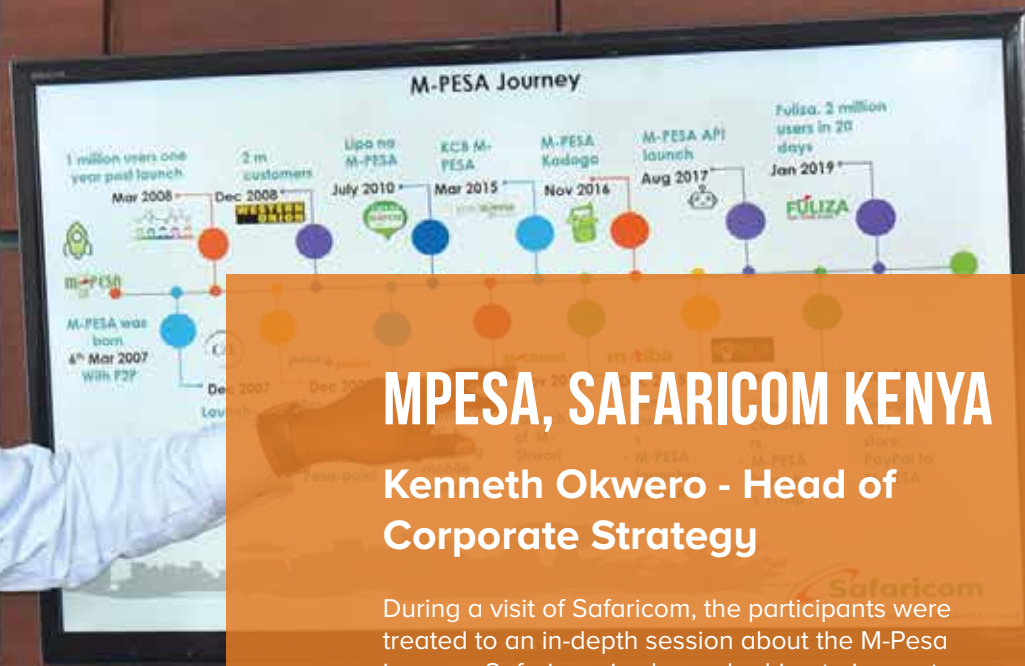


DAY
02



DIGITAL AFRICA

Mobile Financial Services (Mobile Money)



MPESA, SAFARICOM KENYA

Kenneth Okwero - Head of Corporate Strategy

During a visit of Safaricom, the participants were treated to an in-depth session about the M-Pesa journey. Safaricom is always looking to innovate.

“
Transparency and simplicity have been key to the growth of MPesa and Safaricom and we are looking to develop even more simplicity within the business.”

Software Engineering Services



Through partnership with Google, Facebook, and Microsoft, Andela Learning Community (ALC) has trained over 60,000 people since 2017.

ANDELA

Charity Murigi - Marketing and Communications Manager

The learning journey participants had a presentation as well as a tour of the Andela campus. Andela offers software development support to teams within partner organisations. Andela identifies as a learning organisation, always seeking to get better through innovation and openness to new ideas. Andela acts as a bridge between Kenyan innovators and developers and leading software companies across the world.

Baseline Digital Skills Training

TUNAPANDA INSTITUTE

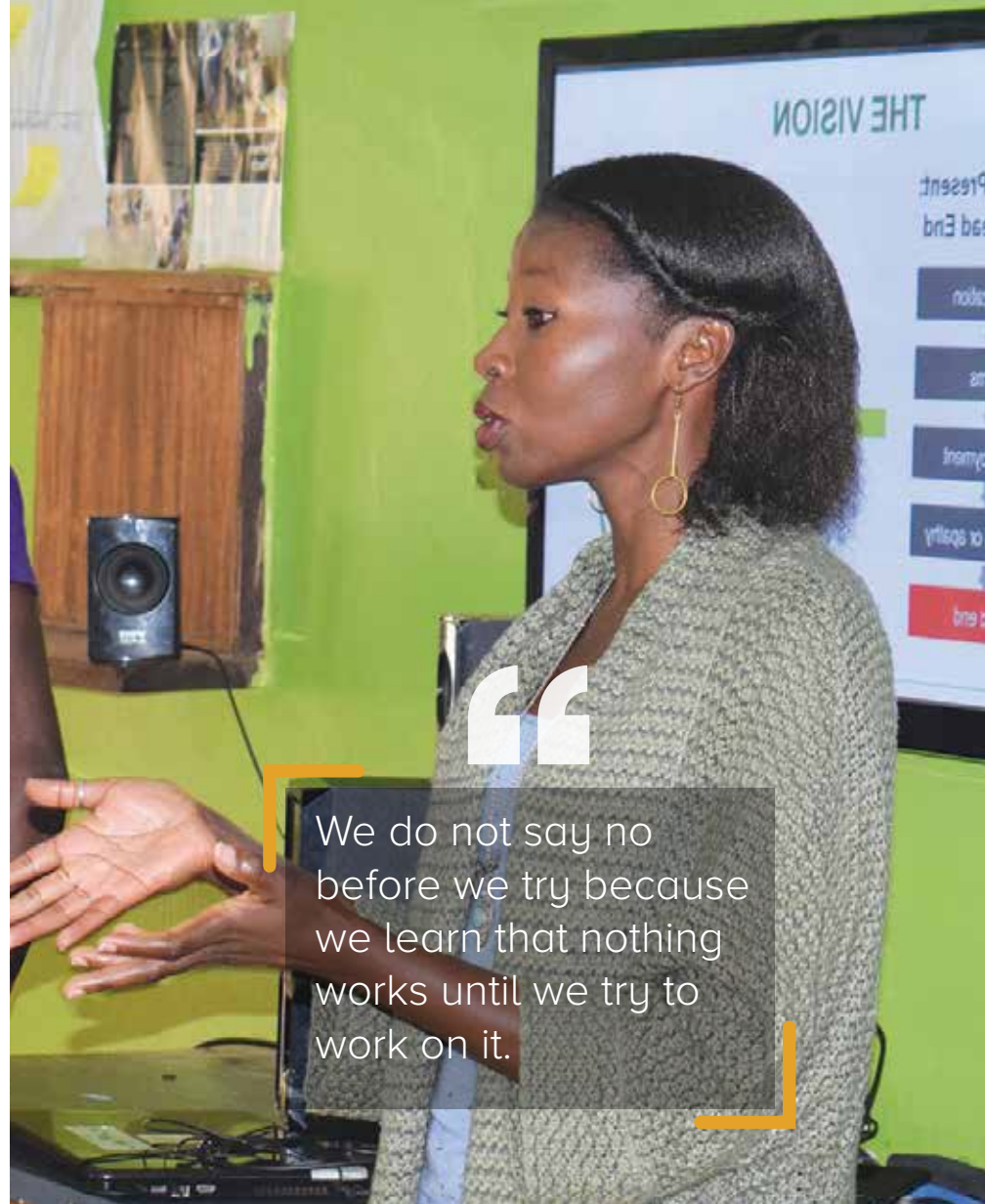
Maureen Moraa - Manager

Tunapanda Institute recruits, trains, and digitally equips young people from Kibera (informal settlement within Nairobi) with IT and soft skills that can help them either get employment or create self-employment. The three-months training program includes basic IT, Design and Design technologies and Entrepreneurship. Tunapanda Institute also provides internet to low income earners and institutions like Schools within the vicinity of their premises.

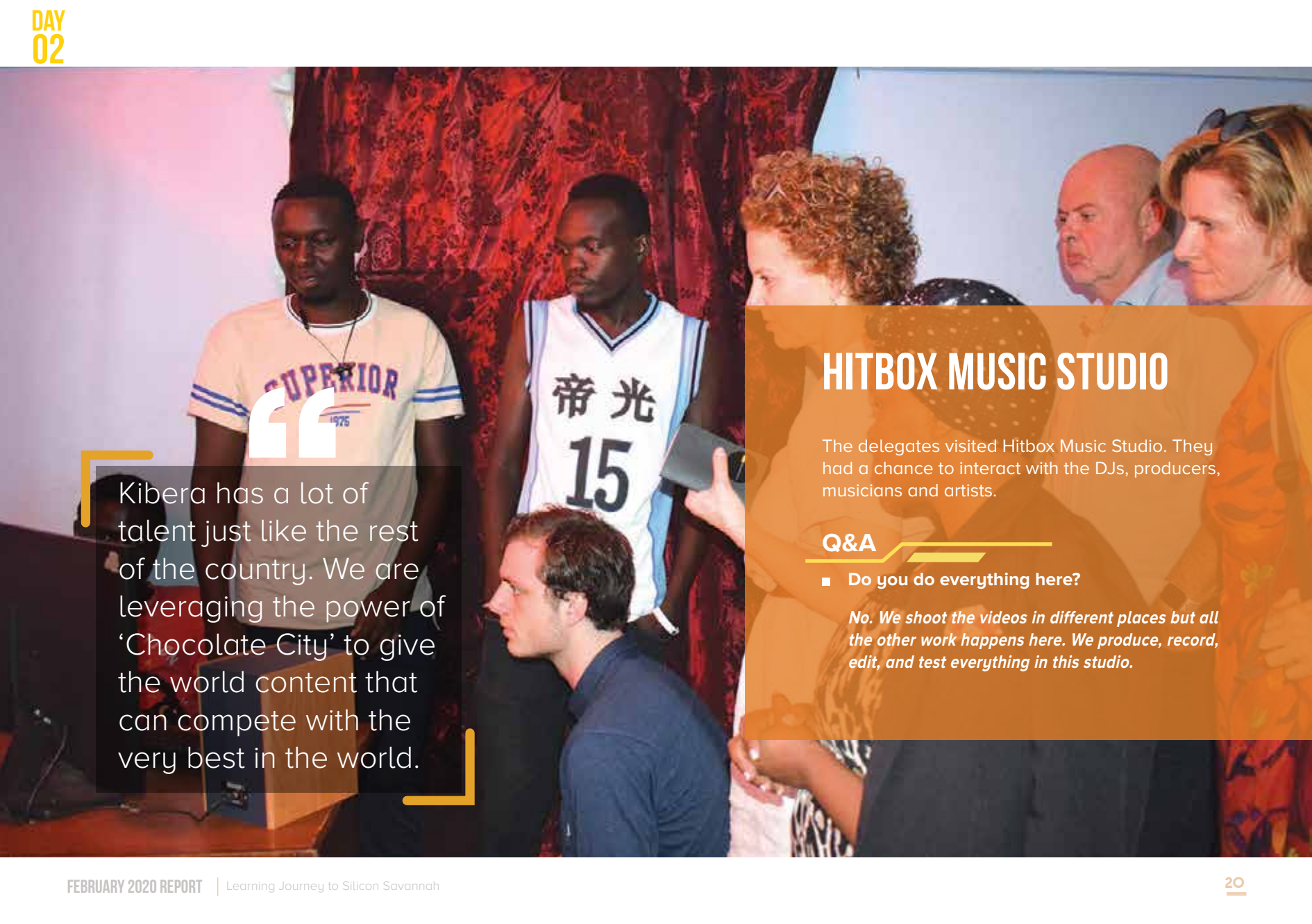
Q&A

- How do you recruit the trainees that you have?

We always call for applications for a new cohort once the current cohort is close to graduation. The applications are often overwhelming. We receive close to a thousand applications, and select just 25 trainees.



“
We do not say no before we try because we learn that nothing works until we try to work on it.”



“Kibera has a lot of talent just like the rest of the country. We are leveraging the power of ‘Chocolate City’ to give the world content that can compete with the very best in the world.”

HITBOX MUSIC STUDIO

The delegates visited Hitbox Music Studio. They had a chance to interact with the DJs, producers, musicians and artists.

Q&A

■ Do you do everything here?

No. We shoot the videos in different places but all the other work happens here. We produce, record, edit, and test everything in this studio.



INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS TOUR KIBERA

The participants visited various villages within Kibera. They were awed by the hospitality, happiness, friendliness, and enterprising nature of the residents of Kibera. Slavey, a youth leader and mentor guided the tour.

What amazed the delegates most was how much the residents of Kibera were trying to make their lives a lot better with a lot less resources than they thought.



I totally thought wrong about these settlements. People are happy, hardworking, and trying harder than anyone I have seen to make life better with very little resources.

Participant



FLAVOURED TEA AT MAMA'S HOUSE

After a walk around Kibera, the tour ended with a cup of sweet, spiced tea at Mama's (not her real name) house.

“

The energy and friendliness radiated throughout Kibera is incredible.

Participant

URBAN AFRICA



DAY
03

Technology and Innovation in Logistics

COPIA KENYA

Tim Steel - CEO

Tim introduced the participants to Copia, a logistics business built to serve the needs of the ballooning yet underserved middle class. Copia's business model is driven by mobile technology and leverages the mobile penetration in Kenya.

Q&A

■ How do you ensure timely fulfilment?

We have fulfilment centres in the densely populated areas in the country. We deliver to those centres and subsequently to the customers through our agents. The process is seamless and fast.

“

Over 50% of the rural economies are driven by remittances from the urban population and we leverage that. Mobile technology gives us the visibility that is necessary in the market.

Connectivity for the urban commuter



We think about ourselves as enablers for customers to connect with businesses online through our devices and Wi-Fi hotspots.

BRCK

Erik Hersman - Founder

BRCK offers fast, affordable, and reliable internet to Kenyans across a variety of locations including public transport buses and public hotspots. They have over 2,000 hotspots in Kenya and Uganda that serve their target market. The participants were treated to a tour of the facility including the offices, repair centre, and innovation section.

Q&A

- How do the customers pay for the services they use?

They pay with time they spend using our services, not money.

Basic mobile technology supporting digital learning in Kenya

ENEZA EDUCATION

Wambura Kimunyu - CEO

The participants were introduced to Eneza Learning Platform, a digital way for learners to improve learning through basic mobile phones. A majority of students from economically challenged households cannot access online learning material. Eneza developed a digitized curriculum for Grade 4 to High School. The curriculum is SMS based and users subscribe. Eneza curriculum helps students to improve their grades. Therefore contributed to the increase in the number of students who transition to the next level of education.

“The challenge with the Kenyan free primary education is that students in public schools don't have access to materials that'll help them connect to education.”

Investing in growing businesses in Kenya

GROWTHAFRICA

Lillian Marenya - Head of Catalytic Support

GrowthAfrica accelerates entrepreneurs and start-ups in Africa by helping develop their leadership skills and linking them to investors. Presently, GrowthAfrica is helping to create a generation of entrepreneurs by incorporating IT and digital systems. Information Technology has enabled the creation of the next generation entrepreneurs, more people are getting into entrepreneurship.

“GrowthAfrica works in an ecosystem that is plagued by good entrepreneurs lacking support and funding yet the company works to build the small businesses and give them a platform for time-bound excellence and success.”

Trajectory of the Middle Class

BUNI MEDIA

'Gado'

Gado identifies as an illustration artist and cartoonist and has used his art to show the challenges and tendencies of the middle class in Kenya. Buni Media produced pan African content that helps in highlighting and promoting human rights, democracy, and highlighting contemporary societal issues.

Q&A

Have you faced any sort of harassment because of the work you do?

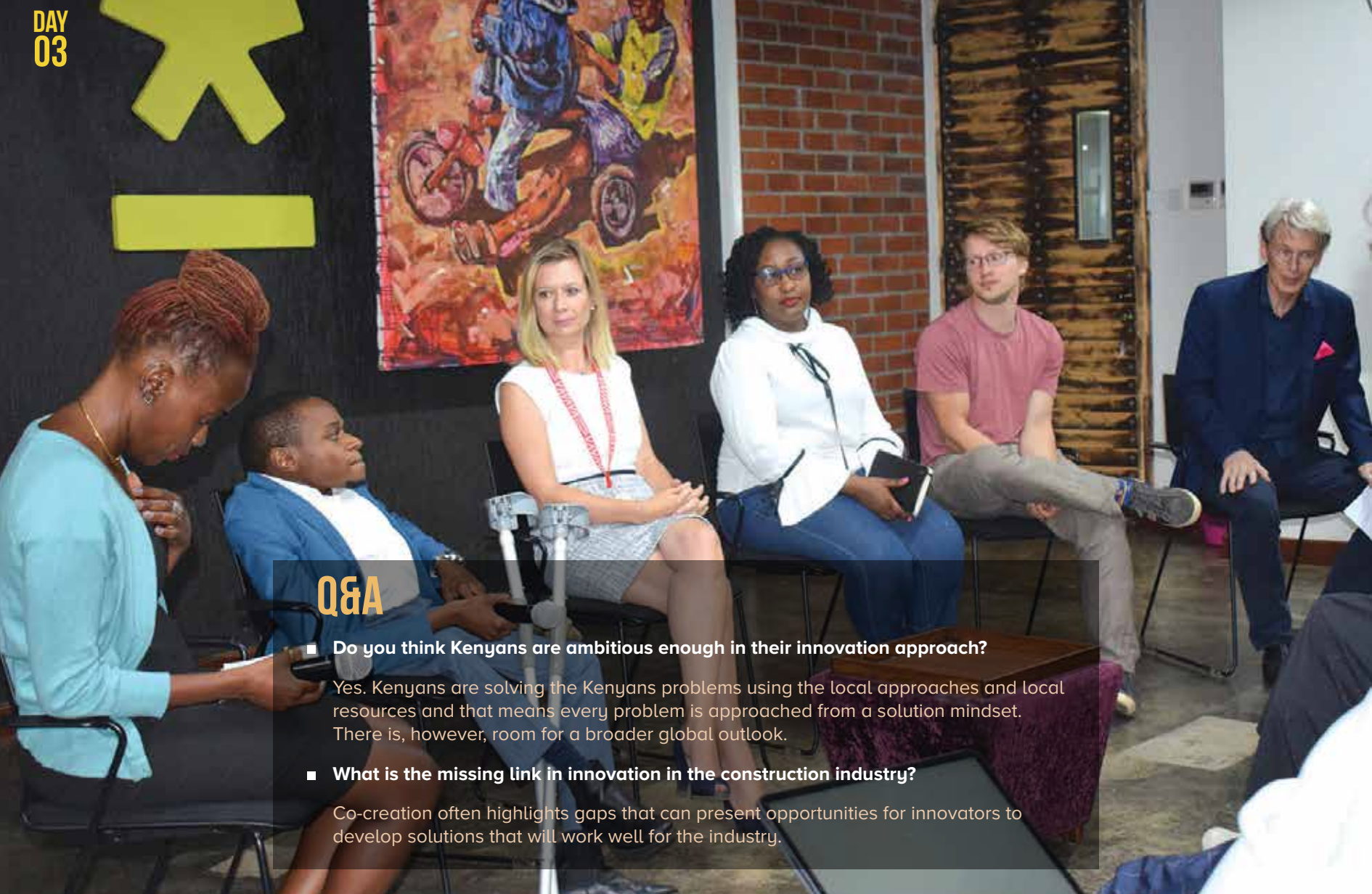
A lot of it. But my defence is simple: I am responsible for what I draw and write but not responsible for how it is interpreted.

The line between the middle class and poverty in Kenya is so thin that sometimes it only takes an illness to drop from the middle class to abject poverty.

Next Africa Networking Seminar

‘FLYING THE PLANE WHILE BUILDING IT’

The Learning Journey to Silicon Savannah participants along with invited Kenyan entrepreneurs and delegates from Advantage Austria Africa Business Delegation engaged in a seminar and networking session. The discussion was on African innovations and the collaboration framework between Kenya and Europe with particular focus on Austria.



Q&A

- **Do you think Kenyans are ambitious enough in their innovation approach?**

Yes. Kenyans are solving the Kenyans problems using the local approaches and local resources and that means every problem is approached from a solution mindset. There is, however, room for a broader global outlook.

- **What is the missing link in innovation in the construction industry?**

Co-creation often highlights gaps that can present opportunities for innovators to develop solutions that will work well for the industry.

InfoBites

Collaboration between start-ups in Kenya and Austrian businesses should be based on three things: shared values, shared work, and shared benefits.

Bernard Chira (Chairman, Association of Start-up and SME enablers of Kenya), Panelist

I am impressed with the entrepreneurial spirit of Kenyans in building solutions with very little resources.

Johannes Degn (CTO and Co-Founder, Lynk Kenya), Panelist.

The time is right for Kenyan innovators and businesses to partner with their Austrian counterparts because Kenya has so many innovative ideas that need support to build and mould.

Mugure Njendu (President, Architectural Association of Kenya)-Panelist

Our impression coming to Kenya is that Kenyans are so innovative and innovatively different. Kenyans are zealous and have grit.

Edith Predorf (Commercial Counsellor of Austria in Eastern Africa, Nairobi), Panelist.

CO-CREATION



DAY
04



Exit
Kutoka

A RIDE ON MADARAKA EXPRESS

Madaraka Express is the culmination of Kenya's biggest infrastructure investment since independence, the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR). The participants took a ride train, boarding at Syokimau (Nairobi Terminus) station.

The Nairobi Urban Tour

A perspective on infrastructure projects

LIVING LAB OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

The team was treated to a bus tour that highlighted the history of Nairobi city, the attractions in the city, the infrastructure development for the city and the country at large.

Kenya and China business

NAPPET TOURS AND TRAVELS

Emmanuel Achapah

Nappet Tours and Travels organises annual business tours by Kenyan businesspeople and entrepreneurs to Guangzhou, China. Nappet guides Kenyan business people to understand the manufacturing and business landscape in China.



The relationship between Kenyan business people and Chinese business people is mainly based on contract manufacturing that has been a huge feature of the annual business tours.

AHK – Delegation of German Industry and Commerce for Eastern Africa



We are recognized as an agency in Kenya and our role is to make sure that German businesses can invest in Kenya and create as much benefit and impact as possible both for Kenya and Germany.

DELEGATE OF GERMAN INDUSTRY

Ms. Maren Diale-Schellschmidt

AHK is part of a global network of 140 German Chambers of Commerce Abroad in 92 countries with over 50,000 member companies worldwide. AHK organizes market entry consultancy for German businesses looking to set up in Kenya.

The participants were hosted by the Delegate of German Industry, Ms. Maren Diale-Schellschmidt, and had discussions around the opportunities and their areas of interest in Kenya, as well as the general challenges.

The Living Lab Team

Maryanne Akoth

Project Lead:
Implementation
MSc. Entrepreneurship and
Innovation Management
Director for Programs, ISBI
at Strathmore University
Business School

Dr. Amollo Ambole

Project Lead:
Vision and Strategy PhD
in Development and
Management;
Researcher at University of
Nairobi (UoN), Kenya

Julia Kamuiru

Lead Field Facilitator &
Photography
Freelance Product
Designer;
Part-time Lecturer
University of Nairobi (UoN),
Kenya

Douglas Logedi

Rapporteur & Urban Tour
Facilitator
Writer & Novelist
Researcher at Living Lab

Peris Njoroge

Field Facilitator
Energy and Sustainability
Consultant
Researcher at Living Lab



LivingLab
University of Nairobi

Next Africa Team



Dr. Amollo Ambole

Amollo Ambole, based in Nairobi, Kenya. A design researcher with a passion for sustainability issues. Has a background in product design and experience in development research. She facilitates co-design processes geared towards sustainability in African cities. From 2017 to mid-2019, she led an interdisciplinary research team in Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa to co-design better access to sustainable household energy in urban slums.



Karin Krobath

Karin Krobath, based in Vienna, Austria. Geographer and consultant. In 2005 she co-founded identifire – the first Austrian agency for Employer Branding and Corporate Culture. She enjoys developing brand environments, giving innovative mindsets a helping hand and bringing about behavioural changes in everyday life. Her work is always about people's empowerment from Austria to Africa and vice versa. Learning Journeys to African countries for business people emerged from her voluntary work as chair of Light for the World. www.identifire.at



Maryanne Akoth

Maryanne Akoth, based in Nairobi, Kenya. A technology innovation enthusiast who is keen to collaborate to provide real-world business and technological solutions. Has vast work experience in information and communication technology with international exposure in Sub-Saharan Africa, Finland and Sweden. She works in entrepreneurship management and is active within the Kenyan innovation ecosystem.



Hans Stoisser

Hans Stoisser, based in Vienna, Austria. Entrepreneur, management consultant and author, has been building infrastructures in African countries for many years. Since 1992, he has been managing ECOTEC, which has been active in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Bulgaria, and Brazil, but particularly in African countries. In his book "The Black Tiger" the economist explains why Europe has missed to link up with modern Africa and what could be done instead. More details at www.hansstoisser.com

