



## Supporting Young African Entrepreneurs

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### **Harambee Africa International**

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Harambee wishes to contribute to enhancing the potential of the different realities of Sub-Saharan Africa through two main lines of action:

1. Strengthen the capacity of local human resources, supporting African entities in the implementation of projects in the field of basic education, vocational training, academia and business;
2. To deepen knowledge about Africa in order to overcome stereotypes and contribute to a culture of coexistence and complementarity.

A too often short-sighted vision of Africa does not help us to grasp the great changes underway where, despite some extreme criticalities, we have the highest rates of expansion in the world.

A continent made up of more than fifty states, each with its own specific characteristics but where a middle class is rapidly consolidating and where the vigorous dynamism of young people (60% of them are young people under 35 years of age) is confronted on a daily basis with institutional, infrastructural and relative limits to inadequate technical skills in relation to the needs of the markets.

In Africa, Harambee supports, through private fundraising, local institutions that work with professionalism and experience to ensure personalized attention with the aim of transferring skills and, at the same time, to offer people the tools to take responsibility for themselves, the ability to make decisions and plan their future.

In Italy and in the countries where the various committees are present (France, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Poland, United States), Harambee carries out different initiatives adapted to the different categories of reference, with particular attention to the awareness of the new generations. Meetings, conferences, competitions, photographic exhibitions and sports competitions are an opportunity to encourage reflection, deepening and mutual listening.

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## **Young African Entrepreneurs project**

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### Context

The problem of unemployment, especially youth unemployment, has become critical in much of Sub-Saharan Africa. Existing estimates indicate that in the area, unemployment affects between 15 to 20 percent of the work force. The levels of youth unemployment vary from country to country but are generally double and sometimes triple the adult rate. Unemployment in Africa affects youth from a broad spectrum of socio-economic groups, both the well and less well educated, although it has particularly stricken a substantial fraction of youth from low-income backgrounds and limited education in urban areas. The problem of unemployment is particularly critical for young women. Girls are often disadvantaged in the labor market because of the perceived conflict between employment and family and the limited range of opportunities they are offered.

The causes of youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa are complex and multidimensional. In general, they can be categorized into demand and supply side problems, they include inappropriate skills, poor economic growth, and growing youth populations.

Given the general absence of formal wage employment in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, we need to understand how self-employment or micro-entrepreneurship can generate sufficient means to produce 'independent' livelihoods for youth.

The Harambee Africa International Young Entrepreneurs project works in this direction, promoting the conditions for young Africans to start their own enterprise, creating self-employment and new jobs for other fellow young people, to ease the difficult transition African youth is facing entering adulthood and therefore giving concrete answers to the widespread consequences of youth unemployment such as criminality or regional or international migrations.

### Objective

The project will concretely contribute to the development of Sub Saharan Africa supporting young local entrepreneurs willing to start new businesses able to generate income and work. The Business projects will deal with the following sectors: energy; agriculture; fashion; new communication technologies.

### Activity

Each year, Harambee Africa International will select interesting business projects proposed by young people aged 18 to 34. The projects will be evaluated considering financial sustainability, demand for the proposed product or service and the socio-economic impact of the initiative. A Harambee committee composed by Italian entrepreneurs will choose the best proposal and the winner will get an economic award to support the launch of its business idea.

The selection of entrepreneurial projects will be carried out with the collaboration **Strathmore University** (Kenya) and its **@iBizAfrica**: a business incubator specialized in information technology and communication.

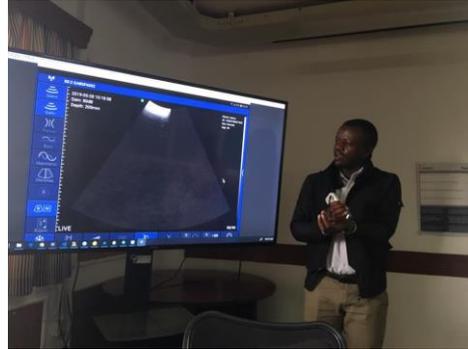
@iBizAfrica seeks to provide a nurturing environment that builds on the potential of the youth to develop ICT solutions and businesses that work for the common good in society. The incubator focuses on the following areas: acting as a focal point for investors to engage potential technology entrepreneurs; fostering an environment for entrepreneurs to develop, nurture and exchange their innovative ideas; providing mentoring and services to start-up companies such as seed capital, legal advice, financial expertise, relevant training and physical resources; providing Business Incubation facilities and establish linkages with other incubation centers in the country and around the world; forging industry partnerships; acting as a focal point for investors to engage potential technology entrepreneurs.

In 2019, the winner was Wycliffe Guguni Nyabada for the project: "Improving Solid Waste Management and Youth Livelihoods in Kibera informal settlements, Kenya". The Award Ceremony took place in Rome on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019.



Since 2012, Strathmore Incubator has coached more than 400 young entrepreneurs, 70% of whom succeed.

In 2019, 40 new would-be entrepreneurs have applied like William Wamwalo, 27 years old, who is studying Sustainable Health Solutions through digital systems:



Kennedy Mumo, 26 years old, who has just launched an e-commerce platform to help Young and low income sailors to reduce barriers:



Steve Njooro, 23 years old, who launched "Inclusion" a custom service solution for fashion and beauty industry:

