



# THE CAREER CAFÉ ANNUAL REPORT 2025–2026

FROM CAREER CONVERSATIONS TO A GROWING  
PAN-AFRICAN PLATFORM



[careercafe.co.ke/](https://careercafe.co.ke/)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                          |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Message from the Executive Chairperson                   | 1  |
| Executive Summary                                        | 2  |
| Why The Career Café Africa Exists                        | 3  |
| Our Model                                                | 3  |
| Year One: How the Work Evolved                           | 4  |
| Major In-Person Engagements                              | 5  |
| Career Conversations - Our Weekly LinkedIn Newsletter    | 5  |
| Our Webinar Journey                                      | 8  |
| Publications                                             | 11 |
| Thought Leadership                                       | 11 |
| Our Pan African Reach                                    | 12 |
| Voices That Shaped the Conversation                      | 14 |
| Testimonials                                             | 15 |
| Partnerships, Collaboration and Institutional Engagement | 17 |
| Our Team                                                 | 19 |
| Built Through Collaboration                              | 23 |
| The People, the Reach and the Ideas That Stayed          | 25 |
| What the First Year Made Clear                           | 26 |
| The Future of Work in Africa: From Lessons to Action     | 27 |
| Looking Ahead: The Future of Work in Action              | 28 |
| Our Next Phase: 2026-2027                                | 29 |
| Acknowledgements                                         | 29 |
| Partnerships That Helped Carry The Work Forward          | 30 |

*Writing & Compilation Lead: Ivy Sirikwa Ogore  
Edited by: Dr. Luchuo Engelbert Bain and Philip Emase  
Design & Layout: James Mganga*







## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the inaugural Annual Report of The Career Café Africa. When we began in August 2025, our ambition was simple but demanding: to create a practical platform where African professionals could move beyond inspiration to build purposeful, visible, resilient and relevant careers. We recognized that qualifications alone are no longer enough. Professionals increasingly need adaptability, communication, networks, digital fluency, confidence and the ability to create value in a rapidly changing world of work.



What followed went beyond a conventional career-development platform. Over the past year, The Career Café Africa has evolved from career conversations into a growing Pan-African ecosystem connecting people, employers, institutions, technology, leadership, policy and opportunity.

We established hubs in Nairobi, Accra and Kigali; delivered major in-person and virtual engagements; published 44 verified LinkedIn newsletter editions; and engaged more than 500 professionals across our wider community.

But numbers tell only part of the story. Our greatest progress has been intellectual and strategic. Through high-level convenings in Nairobi and Kigali, we asked a larger question: How can Africa build a fit-for-purpose workforce capable not merely of responding to the future, but of shaping it? Those conversations highlighted persistent gaps between education and employment, weak labour-market intelligence, the disruptive potential of artificial intelligence, and the need for entrepreneurship, lifelong learning and strategic foresight.

This work now anchors our next chapter: the Africa Future of Work Think Tank and the Africa Future of Work Summit. The Think Tank is conceived as a lean, Africa-led, research-intensive, data- and foresight-driven platform that works continuously—not episodically—to anticipate workforce disruption and translate evidence into policy, partnerships and action.

None of this would have been possible without our speakers, participants, partners, volunteers, team members and the professionals who trusted us with their questions and aspirations.

As we look ahead, our commitment is clear: to move beyond conversation to action—supporting Africans in building purposeful careers while helping shape the workforce Africa's future demands. We do not see others in this space as competitors, but as collaborators and partners in building the Africa we want.

**Luchuo Engelbert Bain, MD, PhD, FAAS**



*Executive Chairperson, The Career Café Africa*



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Career Café Africa launched in August 2025 with a practical concern: many African professionals are qualified and ambitious, yet still struggle with visibility, direction, networks, execution and the pace at which work is changing.

Our response was not to build another motivational platform. We created practical conversations on personal positioning, confidence, job-search strategy, entrepreneurship, execution, artificial intelligence (AI), and changing employer expectations.

Across the reporting period, the work expanded from a Nairobi launch into online learning, a West Africa hub in Accra, Future of Work co-creation convenings in Nairobi and Kigali, Career Conversations, and the September 2026 Future of Work Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass in Kigali.

Across eight tracked sessions, The Career Café Africa recorded 386 participation or registration instances. As at 12 September 2026, the platform recorded 8,173 LinkedIn followers, 254 Instagram followers, 181 WhatsApp Channel followers and 44 verified LinkedIn newsletter editions. These figures represent our platform and event counts rather than unique individuals.

The Career Café Africa is committed to helping Africa turn its youth demographic dividend into a strategic competitive advantage by strengthening professional readiness and contributing to fit-for-purpose workforce systems. This ambition now includes establishing the Africa Future of Work Think Tank and developing the Africa Future of Work Summit.





## WHY THE CAREER CAFÉ AFRICA EXISTS

“What does it take to build a meaningful and relevant career when the world of work is changing faster than many professionals can comfortably keep up with?” This is the central question that has guided The Career Café Africa right from its inception. The challenge is not simply a lack of information. Professionals are surrounded by advice. The harder task is knowing what is useful, what applies to their context, how to turn insight into action, and where to find the relationships and exposure that make progress possible.

Artificial intelligence is changing tasks and expectations. Career paths are becoming less linear. Employers increasingly look beyond formal credentials for adaptability, demonstrable skills, communication, judgement and the ability to create value.

The Career Café Africa was built to make that conversation practical and honest while connecting individual career questions to the systems that shape opportunity across African markets.



## OUR MODEL

Our work has taken shape through a simple pathway:

**Access** —→ **reflection** —→ **connection** —→ **action** —→ **opportunity**



## YEAR ONE: HOW THE WORK EVOLVED

The Career Café Africa's first year reflects a steady evolution from individual career empowerment to a wider Pan-African platform focused on professional development, entrepreneurship, leadership and the Future of Work.

The journey began in Nairobi on 30 August 2025 with the Career Empowerment Session, which brought together 40 guests for conversations on professional positioning, confidence, networking, job-search strategy and the use of AI as a career tool. This first engagement established the platform's practical approach to helping professionals take greater ownership of their careers.

The conversation then moved online. On 2 October 2025, the session "Stand Out Today: Winning Attitude, Personal Brand and a Strong Digital Presence" engaged 30 guests around personal branding, visibility, credibility and digital presence. This was followed on 4 December 2025 by "Awakening the Entrepreneur in You," which focused on entrepreneurship, value creation and building the confidence to begin.

In February 2026, the online session "Ideas Are Easy. Execution Is Everything." shifted the conversation towards strategy, discipline, systems and execution, reinforcing the importance of turning ideas into measurable action.

By June 2026, The Career Café Africa had begun expanding its physical and regional footprint. On 2 June 2026, the West Africa Hub was officially launched in Accra, Ghana, in collaboration with CFAO Mobility Ghana during its Apprentice Trainee and Graduate Trainee Graduation Ceremony. The engagement reached 80 guests and marked an important step in building a wider West African professional community.

Two days later, on 4 June 2026, the platform convened 33 participants in Nairobi for "Rethinking the Future of Work in Africa." The discussion explored skills development, artificial intelligence, lifelong learning, employer responsibility and the foundations of a Pan-African Future of Work Think Tank.

The conversation continued in Kigali on 25 June 2026, where 14 participants examined adaptability, education-to-employment gaps, AI, inclusion and institutional readiness. This second Future of Work convening helped deepen the cross-country perspective and reinforced the need for locally relevant but connected African workforce solutions.

On 28 July 2026, the platform returned online with "Career Conversations: Honest Reflections on Building Meaningful Careers in an Uncertain World." The session attracted 55 registrations and created space for candid discussion around uncertainty, career transitions, setbacks and the changing expectations facing professionals.

The first-year journey culminated in Kigali on 7 September 2026 with the Future of Work Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass. The programme focused on AI literacy, professional value, employability, strategic networking, communication and practical action, helping translate earlier Future of Work discussions into individual and organizational capability.

Throughout the year, The Career Café Africa moved from career-focused conversations to entrepreneurship, execution, regional expansion and Future of Work action. What began as a platform supporting individual professionals increasingly became a broader space connecting professionals, institutions, and ideas across African markets.



# MAJOR IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENTS

The Career Café Africa's first year of in-person engagements shows the platform's evolution from individual career empowerment to a broader Pan-African conversation on workforce readiness, the evolving future of work, and the requisite practical actions that will keep African professionals at pace.

## Career Café Africa Launch and Career Empowerment Session

Nairobi • 30 August 2025 • 40 guests

The Career Café Africa launched in Nairobi with a practical career-development session focused on career ownership, visibility, confidence, strategic positioning, networking and professional growth. Through candid conversations with professionals and industry speakers, participants explored how to communicate their value, build meaningful professional relationships and become more intentional about their career choices.

The session established the platform's approach to career development: moving beyond qualifications and job-search advice to focus on the broader capabilities that African professionals need to build relevant, purposeful careers.

**Key lesson: Career progression increasingly depends on confidence, visibility, relationships, adaptability and the ability to communicate professional value.**



## Future of Work High-Level Co-Creation Convening

Nairobi • 4 June 2026 • 33 participants representing 22 organizations

The Nairobi convening marked a significant expansion of The Career Café Africa's work from individual career development to the broader systems shaping employment and workforce readiness.

Representatives from government, the private sector, academia, civil society and development institutions examined the question: How can Africa build a fit-for-purpose workforce for a rapidly changing global economy?

Discussions highlighted the mismatch between education and labour-market demand, weak labour-market intelligence, the need to reskill

existing workers, and the growing impact of artificial intelligence and automation. Participants also explored six priority areas for continued work: Education, Artificial Intelligence, Agriculture, Health, Entrepreneurship and Strategic Foresight.





The session provided the foundation for the proposed Africa Future of Work Think Tank, envisioned as a platform for research, foresight, policy dialogue and cross-sector collaboration.

**Key lesson: Africa's workforce challenge is not simply about providing more training but ensuring that skills development responds to real and emerging labour-market needs.**

## Future of Work Co-Creation Convening

**Kigali • 25 June 2026 • 14 participants**

The Kigali convening built directly on the Nairobi discussions, testing the emerging Future of Work agenda within a different labour-market and institutional context.

Participants examined adaptability, lifelong learning, emotional intelligence, artificial intelligence, the education-to-employment gap, inclusion and institutional readiness. The discussions also stressed the importance of collaboration between governments, employers, universities, civil society and professionals in responding to workforce disruption.

Kigali strengthened the case for locally informed but connected African approaches to the Future of Work, while reinforcing the need to move from periodic conversations towards sustained research, partnerships and practical action.

**Key lesson: Future-ready workforces require both technical skills and human capabilities, supported by stronger collaboration between the institutions that shape education and employment.**



## Future of Work Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass

**Kigali • 7 September 2026 • 138 unique registrations**

The September forum marked the transition from Future of Work research and dialogue to practical professional development.

Convened with AG Expert Consult under the theme “Identifying, Creating and Nurturing Value in the Future of Work: What It Takes to Stand Out in an Uncertain World,” the programme focused on helping professionals understand how the changing world of work affects their own careers.





Participants explored how to identify and communicate professional value, strengthen career visibility, build purposeful networks, recognize transferable skills, and navigate an increasingly digital and AI-driven workplace.

The forum translated lessons from the Nairobi and Kigali convenings into practical actions that professionals could apply within their careers and organizations.

**Key lesson: Future-readiness becomes meaningful when broad discussions about technology, skills, and labour markets translate into practical choices professionals can make today.**

Together, these engagements demonstrate a clear progression in The Career Café Africa's first year: from empowering individual professionals, to examining the systems shaping Africa's workforce, to translating Future of Work insights into practical action.





## OUR WEBINAR JOURNEY

Virtual programming allowed The Career Café Africa to reach professionals beyond physical events while exploring practical themes around visibility, entrepreneurship, execution and navigating increasingly uncertain career environments.

### Stand Out Today: Winning Attitude, Personal Brand and a Strong Digital Presence

2 October 2025 • 30 guests

Speakers: Alain Abeh, MD, MBA; Dr. Obichi Obiajunwa; Grace Kibunja; Lambert Mbeinta

The inaugural webinar aimed to equip professionals with practical tools to stand out in an increasingly competitive, digital job market. Discussions explored personal branding through authenticity, consistency and engagement; developing a growth-oriented mindset; managing one's digital footprint; and building reputation capital. Participants were encouraged to audit their online presence, communicate their value consistently and use professional platforms more intentionally. The session reinforced that qualifications alone are insufficient when credibility and visibility increasingly influence opportunity.



**Outcome: Participants gained practical approaches for strengthening professional positioning and digital credibility.**

*"Your online presence is your handshake to the world." — Dr Obichi Obiajunwa*

### Awakening the Entrepreneur in You

4 December 2025 • 30 guests

Speakers: Dr Mary Okumu Jimoh; Tumelo Nkese; Njeri Kibunja; Dr Bruce Onduru

This session aimed to help participants develop an entrepreneurial mindset beyond the conventional idea of simply starting a business. Discussions focused on adaptability, opportunity recognition, innovation, confidence, relationships and creating value from available resources. Participants explored the importance of identifying a unique selling point, testing ideas, learning from failure and building networks that support long-term growth. Njeri Kibunja also addressed internal barriers such as fear of failure, perfectionism and limiting beliefs, reinforcing the importance of deliberately building a healthy and strategic mindset.



**Outcome: Participants were encouraged to approach problems as opportunities and take intentional action towards creating value.**

*"Failure should be viewed as data, not defeat." — Tumelo Nkese*



## Ideas Are Easy. Execution Is Everything.

20 February 2026 • 30 guests

Speakers: Nadege Ade; Dr Gift Malunga; Mabel Tsyawo K.

The February webinar addressed the gap between having potential and producing measurable results. Its objective was to help participants move from ideas and planning towards disciplined execution, strategic action and sustainable impact. Mabel Tsyawo introduced the “Vision in Motion” framework and the GAFI model—Goal, Action, Focus and Intentionality—while Nadege Ade shared practical lessons on courage, collaboration and execution in high-stakes environments. Dr Gift Malunga challenged participants to move from scarcity thinking towards opportunity creation, particularly when resources are constrained.

**Outcome:** The session provided practical frameworks for turning ideas into consistent action and results.

*“Vision in Motion is the daily living of a long-term goal.” — Mabel Tsyawo K.*



**THE CAREER CAFE**  
Build a career with purpose

**IDEAS ARE EASY.  
EXECUTION IS EVERYTHING.**

HOW TO TURN  
POTENTIAL INTO  
STRATEGY, RESULTS &  
IMPACT

20 FEB, 2026  
**8:00 PM – 9:30 PM  
(EAT)**

**JOIN WEBINAR**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[HTTPS://WWW.CAREERCAFE.CO.KE](https://www.careercafe.co.ke)

MORE INFORMATION CALL US  
**+254 720087837**

ONLINE (GOOGLE MEET)

## Career Conversations: Honest Reflections on Building Meaningful Careers in an Uncertain World

28 July 2026 • 55 registrations

Designed as a candid moderated conversation rather than a traditional presentation, Career Conversations explored the realities often left out of polished career stories. Speakers reflected on non-linear career paths, adaptability, character, organizational politics, communication, continuous learning, networking, artificial intelligence and the changing value of academic qualifications. Participants were encouraged to build social capital deliberately, develop transferable skills and use internships, volunteering and mentorship strategically. The discussion reinforced that careers are built through accumulated experience, relationships, learning and contribution rather than job titles alone.

**Outcome:** Participants gained a more realistic framework for navigating uncertainty while staying relevant and opportunity ready.

*“Fortune favours the prepared mind.” — Dr Armand Mbanya*



**TUESDAY  
JULY 28<sup>TH</sup>  
2026**

**CAREER CAFE**

**CAREER CONVERSATIONS**  
RETHINKING THE FUTURE OF WORK IN AFRICA BELOW THE CAREER

Dr. Luchuo Engelbert Bain, MD, PhD, FAAS, is a physician, implementation research scientist, bioethicist, and Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences with over 15 years of experience advancing global health policy, health systems strengthening, and leadership across Africa and globally.

He serves as Senior Implementation Research Scientist and Deputy Director of the MSC in Global Women's Health at the University of Oxford and is the Founder of Global Health Otherwise.

Dr. Bain is also the Convener of The Career Café and leads the Africa Future of Work Think Tank, a Pan-African platform dedicated to shaping a fit-for-purpose, future-ready workforce through strategic foresight, evidence generation, innovation, and cross-sector collaboration. He is widely recognised for challenging conventional thinking and leading transformative conversations on global health, leadership, diplomacy, artificial intelligence, and the future of work.

**Dr. Luchuo Engelbert  
Moderator**

[@thecareercafeafrika](https://www.careercafe.co.ke) [@thecareercafeafrika](https://www.careercafe.co.ke) [info@careercafe.co.ke](mailto:info@careercafe.co.ke)



## OUR JOURNEY

Nairobi base/launch → Accra community launch (2 June 2026) → Nairobi Future of Work convening (4 June 2026) → Kigali Future of Work convening (25 June 2026) → Kigali Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass (7 September 2026).



## PUBLICATIONS

Over the reporting period, The Career Café Africa published 44 articles in our LinkedIn newsletter, Career Café Conversations, building a growing body of practical and forward-looking career and workforce thought leadership. The articles are published every Thursday, providing a consistent weekly platform for sharing insights, ideas, and practical perspectives with the Career Café community.

Our newsletter articles explore the realities shaping careers and workplaces today—from career strategy, employability, and entrepreneurship to leadership, professional visibility, AI, workforce readiness, and the Future of Work in Africa. Through these conversations, the platform has sought to move beyond generic career advice and offer professionals, entrepreneurs, and emerging leaders perspectives they can apply to real career and business decisions.

The content also reflects the evolution of The Career Café itself. What began with conversations around entrepreneurship, career development and execution has expanded into deeper discussions about Africa's workforce transformation, future-ready skills, changing workplace expectations and how African professionals can position themselves to compete internationally.

***44 Articles Published | Published Every Thursday | Career and Business Strategy | Employability and Skills | Entrepreneurship | AI and the Future of Work | African Workforce Development***



**Read Rwanda Dispatch feature - “Kigali Forum Pushes Youth to Trade Credentials for Real Value in the Age of AI”**

---

Scan QR to see Article

## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The Career Café Africa’s thought-leadership work extends the platform beyond events. Articles, newsletters and Future of Work publications turn recurring career questions into resources that can continue circulating after a session ends.

### Core thought-leadership streams

- Career Conversations weekly newsletter
- Future of Work in Africa research and synthesis
- Career Conversations webinar series
- Articles on career visibility, execution, leadership, adaptability, AI and professional value



# OUR PAN-AFRICAN REACH

## ACROSS BORDERS, ONE GROWING CONVERSATION

In its first year, The Career Café Africa grew from a Nairobi-based platform into a wider regional community. Physical engagements in Kenya, Ghana and Rwanda, supported by virtual Career Conversations, created different entry points for professionals, employers, academics, policymakers, entrepreneurs and development practitioners to engage with careers and the changing world of work.

### KENYA — A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK CONVERSATION

Nairobi remained the organization's home base and a key starting point for its first-year journey. On 4 June 2026, The Career Café convened its inaugural high-level Future of Work in Africa gathering, bringing together voices from government, the private sector, academia, civil society and international development.

The breadth of participation was significant. The Nairobi convening brought together 22 organizations across government, multilateral institutions, development finance, academia, the private sector, and civil society. Organizations represented included the African Development Bank, International Labour Organization, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, the Mastercard Foundation, the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE Africa), the International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED), the United States International University-Africa (USIU-Africa), the Nairobi County Government, Act! (Act Change Transform), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), the AI Centre of Excellence (AICE) and various ministries and departments within the Government of Kenya.

The diversity of institutions in the room was important to the co-creation process, ensuring the Future of Work discussion was informed not only by policymakers and employers, but also by researchers, educators, development actors, and civil-society organizations working directly with communities and professionals.

### GHANA — BUILDING A WEST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

The Career Café Africa extended its physical presence into Accra, Ghana, where the Career Café community was formally launched in collaboration with CFAO Mobility Ghana on 2 June 2026. The launch introduced the platform to a new professional community and opened conversations around career development, innovation, emerging opportunities and the future of work.

Follow-up correspondence after the event reflected the strength of the collaboration and the intention to continue building a Career Café Africa presence in Ghana. The Accra engagement therefore represented more than a single event: it established a foundation for continued programming, partnerships and a stronger West African connection.

## RWANDA — FROM CONVERSATION TO ACTION

Rwanda became another important part of the regional journey. On 25 June 2026, a Future of Work convening in Kigali extended the conversation from the Future of Work Think Tank that began in Nairobi, with a strong emphasis on execution, adaptability, emotional intelligence, the education-to-employment gap, artificial intelligence, inclusion, and cross-sector partnership.

That thinking moved further into practice on 7 September 2026. The Career Café Africa, together with AG Expert Consult, convened the Future of Work Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass in Kigali. The event received 138 unique registrations. Registrants represented universities, businesses, civil-society organizations, technology ventures, financial institutions and professional communities, including representation from the University of Rwanda, the African Leadership University, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), GIZ Rwanda, NCBA Bank and Britam Insurance.

Kigali therefore became a place where the Future of Work conversation began to move visibly from reflection to application—linking ideas about workforce readiness to practical learning, institutional collaboration, and professional action.

## BEYOND THE ROOM — A VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

The physical footprint tells only part of the story. During the reporting period, four tracked webinar and Career Conversations sessions enabled professionals to engage regardless of location. The virtual series was intentionally built around candid professional experiences rather than formal presentations, creating space for conversations about uncertainty, resilience, technological disruption, networks, lifelong learning and the choices that shape meaningful careers.

Together, the physical and virtual programmes point to an emerging model for The Career Café Africa: locally grounded conversations connected by a wider African agenda.

3

Countries with physical  
programming

22

Organizations represented at  
the Nairobi convening

138

Unique registrations  
recorded for the September  
Kigali forum

4

Tracked webinar / Career  
Conversations sessions

Local conversations. Regional connections. A growing African community.



# VOICES THAT SHAPED THE CONVERSATION

The speaker mix has deliberately crossed sectors and disciplines. The profiles below reflect the expertise descriptions contained in the reviewed annual report source.

| Speaker                       | Area/role reflected in source.                                        |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nyimbi Otero                  | Technology, innovation and digital transformation                     |
| Oumar O. Onyango              | Public health, strategy and stakeholder engagement                    |
| Zaha Indimuli                 | Media, advocacy and social impact                                     |
| Alain Abeh, MD, MBA           | Pharmaceutical medical affairs, health economics and entrepreneurship |
| Dr Mary Okumu Jimoh           | Gender, environment and social justice                                |
| Tumelo Nkese                  | Entrepreneurship, mentorship and digital creation                     |
| Dr Bruce Onduru               | Entrepreneurship, brand development and fashion                       |
| Nadege Ade                    | Health systems and health policy                                      |
| Dr Gift Malunga               | Public health and leadership                                          |
| Mabel Tsyawo K.               | Leadership, finance, mentoring and organizational development         |
| Grace Kibunja                 | Strategic advocacy, communications and partnerships                   |
| Dr Obichi Obiajunwa           | Public health, innovation, entrepreneurship and emerging technology   |
| Prof. Keith Straughan         | Leadership, learning and organizational development                   |
| Susan Nkengasong              | Clinical research and public health                                   |
| Dr Mbanya Armand              | Global health security, AI governance and ethics                      |
| Lambert Mbeinta               | Economics, finance, governance and sustainable development            |
| Kanamugire Bicura Junior, MBA | Speaker/facilitator, Kigali Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass |
| Kabanga Roland                | Speaker/facilitator, Kigali Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass |
| Samuel Iyokwizerwa            | Speaker/facilitator, Kigali Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass |
| Dr. Luchuo Engelbert Bain     | Moderator, Convener and Executive Chairperson, The Career Café Africa |

# TESTIMONIALS — WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

## Reflections That Stayed Beyond the Room

Behind every registration, convening and masterclass is a person who brought their own experience, questions and ambitions into the conversation. These reflections show how Career Café Africa's conversations continued beyond the room — into questions of African creativity, collaboration, professional value and meaningful action.

## NAIROBI — FUTURE OF WORK IN AFRICA CONVENING

### Stacy Maritim — African Creativity, AI and Action

*“As Africans, our challenge is not our ability to think. As we engage with AI and innovation, we must ensure that technology does not do the thinking for us in a way that takes away our originality and creativity. And as we hold these conversations, we must ensure they lead to clear outcomes — not simply speaking for the sake of speaking but identifying what we want to take forward from the discussions.”*

Stacy Maritim

Content Writer and Contributor | Participant, Future of Work in Africa Convening | Nairobi, Kenya | June 2026

### Peninah Yumbya, PhD — Collaboration and Youth Co-Creation

*“My key takeaway is that we need everyone engaged in this. No one sector alone can solve the problem. We need the education system, finance, government and the private sector involved — and we also need young people as co-creators, because ultimately, we are doing this for the youth. Their voices need to be heard as we shape solutions that prepare them for the future.”*

Peninah Yumbya, PhD

International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED) | Participant, Future of Work in Africa Convening | Nairobi, Kenya | June 2026

## KIGALI — KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

### Samuel Iyokwizerwa — Building the Future of Work Ecosystem

*“An inspiring morning at the Kigali Convention Centre.”*

Samuel reflected on the importance of creating platforms that rethink workforce ecosystems and prepare Africa's young people for a rapidly changing, AI-driven economy, while underscoring the value of continued collaboration around the Future of Work agenda.



## Sonia Kamikazi — Creating Value with Your Skills

*“Having skills is only part of the equation. Understanding how to create value with those skills is what truly matters.”*

Sonia Kamikazi

Business Development Enthusiast | Strategic Growth and Innovation

Participant, Future of Work Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass | Kigali, Rwanda | September 2026

Reflecting on the Forum and Masterclass, Sonia shared how the conversations challenged her to think beyond simply standing out professionally and instead ask: What problems can I solve, and what difference can my work make?

**“The goal is not just to have skills. It is to know how to create value with them.”**

## **FROM CONVERSATION → REFLECTION → ACTION**

Listen. Question. Connect. Apply. Share. That is the community we are building across Africa.



# PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION AND INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

---

## Global Health Otherwise

Collaborator on the 28 July 2026 Career Conversations webinar and on shared professional-development and Future of Work programming



## CFAO Mobility Ghana

Host and collaborator for the 2 June 2026 launch of The Career Café Africa West Africa Hub in Accra, connecting career development with graduate and apprentice transition into the workplace.



## AG Expert Consult

Rwanda-based strategic collaborator for the 7 September 2026 Future of Work Knowledge-to-Action Forum and Masterclass



**EXPERT CONSULT**  
Your sustainable growth partner

## International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED)

Engaged The Career Café Africa in Nairobi on 20 July 2026 to explore potential strategic collaboration. No formal partnership had been concluded by the close of the reporting period.





## Strategic collaborators and partnership relationships

The organizations above had direct collaboration, hosting, or partnership-development roles during the reporting period. Participation in a Career Café convening is not, by itself, described as a formal partnership.

## Wider institutional participation and engagement

The Career Café Africa also engaged representatives or participants from a wider institutional network through its Nairobi and Kigali Future of Work activities. These organizations are acknowledged for their participation or representation; their inclusion does not imply a formal partnership.

The 4 June 2026 Nairobi Future of Work co-creation convening brought together representatives from across government, multilateral institutions, development finance, academia, the private sector and civil society. The diversity of institutions in the room was important to the co-creation process, ensuring the Future of Work discussion was informed not only by policymakers and employers, but also by researchers, educators, development actors, and civil-society organizations working directly with communities and professionals.

## Institutions represented or engaged

African Development Bank (AfDB)  
International Labour Organization (ILO)  
Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS)  
Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM)  
Mastercard Foundation  
Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE Africa)  
International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED)  
United States International University-Africa (USIU-Africa)  
Nairobi City County Government  
Act! (Act Change Transform)  
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)  
AI Centre of Excellence (AICE)  
Government of Kenya ministries and departments  
University of Rwanda  
African Leadership University (ALU)  
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Rwanda  
NCBA Bank  
Britam Insurance  
Association of Insurance Companies of Africa (AISCA)  
SPEED Coaching Ltd  
EXCI-MAA  
Imcon Consulting Ltd

# OUR TEAM

## The People Behind the Career Café Africa

The Career Café Africa is powered by a multidisciplinary team and network of professionals bringing together expertise in leadership, operations, regional engagement, communications, content, research, professional development and strategic partnerships.

Working across Africa and beyond, our people share one purpose: to create practical pathways for professional growth, strengthen meaningful connections and contribute to a future of work in which African professionals can thrive.

## LEADERSHIP

### **DR. LUCHUO ENGELBERT BAIN, MD, PHD, FAAS**

*Co-Founder and Executive Chairperson*

Dr. Luchuo Engelbert Bain is the Co-Founder and Executive Chairperson of The Career Café Africa and a global health expert. He is also the Convener of Global Health Otherwise, a platform advancing equitable partnerships, thought leadership and African-led solutions.

Dr. Bain champions the decolonization of global health discourse, health diplomacy and impactful science communication, while advising international organizations and mentoring emerging leaders across the continent.

At The Career Café Africa, he provides strategic direction, thought leadership and vision for long-term impact.



### **MS. IVY SIRIKWA OGORE**

*Co-Founder and Head of Operations*

Ms. Ivy Sirikwa Ogore is the Co-Founder and Head of Operations of The Career Café Africa. She brings strong experience in leadership, operations and strategy, with a background in managing teams and driving growth in the microfinance and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Ivy leads organizational strategy, partnerships and programme execution, ensuring The Career Café Africa runs efficiently and delivers high-impact initiatives.

She is passionate about building systems, empowering young people and creating practical pathways for career growth and entrepreneurship across Africa.





# LEADERSHIP

## MARCEL NKWAIN YUH

*Rwanda Hub Lead*

Marcel Nkwain Yuh is a seasoned Chartered Accountant and business advisory professional with over 11 years of experience across East and Central Africa and the UAE.

He currently serves as Regional Manager at EXCI-MAA and Managing Director of Career Café Ltd Rwanda. With expertise spanning statutory audits, tax compliance and strategic advisory, Marcel brings a strong understanding of both international standards and African market realities. As Rwanda Hub Lead, he supports The Career Café Africa's vision of advancing leadership, workforce transformation and professional growth across the region.



## ABED MENSAH TEKPE

*Regional Focal Person for West and Central Africa*

Abed Mensah Tekpe plays a key role in coordinating regional partnerships, supporting programme delivery and strengthening The Career Café Africa's presence across West and Central Africa.

With a strong background in operations, administration and multi-stakeholder coordination, Abed supports executive leadership as well as the planning and execution of regional activities. His work focuses on building strong systems, enabling collaboration and expanding Career Café's regional impact.



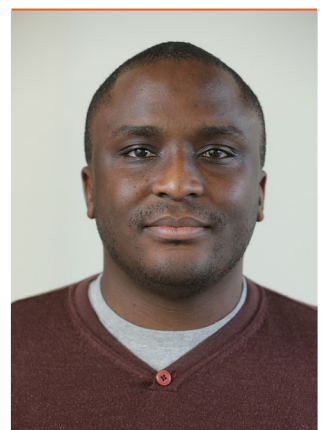
## AJIME TOM

*Regional Focal Person for West and Central Africa*

Ajime Tom is a biomedical scientist and quality science professional with experience across research, quality control and scientific operations within the medical, biomedical, pharmaceutical and chemical sectors.

Currently serving as a Quality Science Graduate Scientist at GSK in Belgium, he brings a strong background in scientific research, leadership, communication and project coordination.

As Europe Regional Representative, Ajime supports The Career Café Africa's mission of fostering professional growth, global collaboration and future-focused conversations around leadership, innovation and workforce transformation across Africa and beyond.



## **MABEL TSYAWO**

*West Africa Engagement and Strategic Partnerships*

Mabel supports The Career Café Africa's strategic partnerships and engagement in West Africa, contributing to relationship-building with professionals, organizations and institutions across the region.

Her work supports Career Café's ambition to strengthen its Pan-African network and create locally relevant opportunities for professional development, leadership and collaboration.



## **COMMUNICATIONS, CONTENT and CREATIVE**

### **THE TEAM BEHIND OUR VOICE**

Behind every programme, event, article and digital conversation is a team working to translate The Career Café's ideas and opportunities into meaningful content and experiences for our community.

## **SARAH MOTLALEPULE BANDA**

*Communications and Social Media Operations Lead*

Sarah Motlalepule Banda brings over five years of experience in digital media and customer engagement.

She leads content creation and day-to-day social media operations, ensuring The Career Café Africa's voice remains clear, engaging and consistent across platforms.

With a strong audience-centered approach, Sarah translates programmes opportunities and ideas into compelling stories that build community, grow visibility and strengthen the organization's impact.



## **STACY MARITIM**

*Communications and Social Media Operations Lead*

Stacy contributes to The Career Café Africa's written content and knowledge-sharing work, helping translate ideas and conversations around careers, professional development and the Future of Work into accessible content.

Her contribution supports The Career Café's growing body of articles, reflections and professional-development resources.





## LINDA MARY

### *Content Creator and Content Support*

Linda supports The Career Café Africa's content and creative work, contributing to the development of engaging material for programmes, campaigns and digital platforms.

Through content creation and content support, she helps translate Career Café's activities, ideas and opportunities into accessible and engaging communication for its growing community.

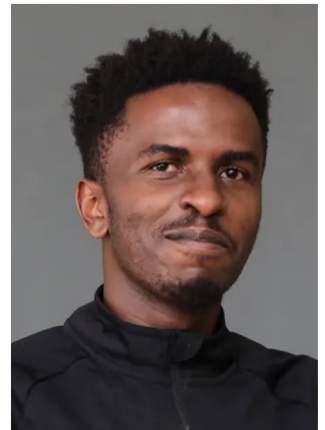


## JAMES MGANGA

### *Graphic Design and Creative Support*

James supports the visual communication of The Career Café Africa's programmes and initiatives, translating event concepts, campaigns and organizational messages into creative materials for digital and physical platforms.

His contribution helps strengthen the visual identity through which Career Café communicates its work and engages its community.



## SENIOR ADVISORS, COLLABORATORS and CONTRIBUTORS

### DR. DERICK YONGABI

#### *Senior Advisor, Scholarship and Career Pathways*

Dr. Derick Yongabi is a Postdoctoral Fellow and experimental physicist at KU Leuven, Belgium, working across physics, biomedical science, nanotechnology and biosensors. His academic journey spans Cameroon, the United Kingdom and Belgium, with advanced training in physics, biomedical science, research methods and medical imaging.

His research focuses on label-free technologies for cancer diagnostics, drug response, antimicrobial resistance, biosensing, food safety and biotechnology. He has authored over 24 peer-reviewed publications, is co-inventor on European and U.S. patents, and reviews for several international journals. Beyond research, Dr. Yongabi supervises students and is passionate about mentoring others through academic and career pathways. As Senior Advisor, Scholarship and Career Pathways, he brings this experience to The Career Café Africa, supporting its commitment to helping professionals and emerging scholars navigate academic opportunities, career development and international pathways.



## **SAMUEL IYOKWIZERWA**

*Strategic Collaborator | Founder and Executive Director, AG Expert Consult*

Samuel has supported The Career Café Africa's engagement in Rwanda through stakeholder mobilisation, partnership development and the delivery of Future of Work activities.

Through Career Café's collaboration with AG Expert Consult, he has helped convene professionals and institutions around conversations on skills, professional value, opportunity and the changing world of work.



## **PHILIP EMASE**

*Advisor and Contributor*

Philip contributes advisory research and knowledge-development support to The Career Café Africa.

An international development strategist with two decades' experience, his contributions have supported the organization's thinking around the Future of Work and the development of knowledge products that translate conversations and convenings into actionable insights.



## **BUILT THROUGH COLLABORATION**

The Career Café Africa is more than a collection of individual roles. It is a growing network of people who bring different disciplines, geographies, experiences and perspectives to a shared mission.

From those shaping strategy and designing programmes behind the scenes, to those building regional relationships, creating content, strengthening our visual identity, advising the organization and connecting our community to new opportunities, every contribution matters.

Together, we are building a platform that is African in perspective, Pan-African in ambition and global in outlook.

**ONE TEAM. MANY PERSPECTIVES. ONE SHARED PURPOSE.**  
**Building Careers with Purpose.**





THE  
CAREER CAFÉ



# THE PEOPLE, THE REACH AND THE IDEAS THAT STAYED

The first year of The Career Café Africa was ultimately about people — the professionals who joined a conversation, attended a session, shared an experience, connected with someone new or left with an idea they could carry into their own work.

Across eight tracked sessions for which participation or registration figures were available, 386 participation and registration instances were recorded. These figures are not presented as unique individuals, as some people may have participated in more than one activity or event. Still, they offer a meaningful picture of the growing engagement around The Career Café's work.

Beyond individual programmes, a wider community continued to form around these conversations.

A community that continued to grow 8,173 LinkedIn followers, 254 Instagram followers, 181 WhatsApp Channel followers, 44 verified newsletter editions

As of 12 September 2026, these figures reflected a growing digital community around The Career Café Africa. The website also reached 500+ engaged professionals. More than numbers.

Some of the clearest signs of impact were found not in the numbers, but in the ideas people shared and carried forward. Across conversations on careers, entrepreneurship, leadership and the future of work, certain messages stayed with us:

***“Strategy without execution is merely a wish. Execution without strategy is stagnation in motion.”***

***Mabel Tsyawo***

***“Execution is not about waiting for resources – it’s about using what you already have strategically.”***

***Dr Gift Malunga***

***“Career is not a snapshot. Career is your full body of work, the impact you want to have on your community, and the societies you are serving through your job and your role.”***

***Dr Armand Mbanya***

***“Communication is becoming more valuable because almost anyone can build with AI. The people who can communicate what they’ve built will stand out.”***

***Dr Obichi Obiajunwa***

These voices capture something the numbers alone cannot: The Career Café is becoming a space where people do more than attend. They reflect, exchange ideas, challenge assumptions and leave with something useful for the next step in their careers and work.



## WHAT THE FIRST YEAR MADE CLEAR

Across our first year, the conversations kept returning to a few important realities about careers, entrepreneurship and the changing world of work. Different topics and audiences often led back to the same lessons:

- 1** Relevance must be continually renewed. Qualifications and experience remain valuable, but staying relevant requires continuous learning and the ability to respond to a changing market.
- 2** Execution is where progress is won or lost. Ideas, ambition and plans are only starting points. Across career growth and entrepreneurship, the harder challenge is consistently turning intention into action.
- 3** Technology is already reshaping careers. Artificial intelligence is no longer a future concern. It is changing how professionals learn, work, make decisions and position themselves today.
- 4** Relationships expand opportunity. Skills matter, but so do trust, access, collaboration and community. Professional growth is strengthened by the relationships built along the way.
- 5** Career growth is rarely linear. Uncertainty, transitions, setbacks and unexpected choices are part of the journey. Adaptability and clarity matter as much as having a plan.
- 6** Individual effort and the wider system are connected. Career outcomes are influenced not only by personal choices, but also by education, employers, policy, technology and labour-market conditions.

Together, these lessons have helped sharpen The Career Café's focus: preparing professionals not simply for their next opportunity, but for a world of work that will continue to change.





# THE FUTURE OF WORK IN AFRICA: FROM LESSONS TO ACTION

## THE AFRICA FUTURE OF WORK THINK TANK

As a next step to transition from conversation towards a longer-term platform, the Future of Work conversations convened by The Career Café Africa in Nairobi and Kigali created more than a record of what is changing. They surfaced a clear need for a sustained African platform that can connect evidence, lived experience, institutional insight and practical action around the changing world of work.

Building on the lessons already gathered, The Career Café Africa is developing the Africa Future of Work Think Tank as a platform for research, foresight, convening, policy dialogue and cross-sector collaboration. The aim is to create continuity between conversations — linking the realities professionals face with the perspectives of employers, educators, researchers, policymakers, entrepreneurs and other institutions shaping Africa's labour markets.

The developing agenda around the Think Tank prioritizes six connected areas: education, artificial intelligence, agriculture, health, entrepreneurship, and strategic foresight. Together, these areas provide a practical framework for examining how technology, skills systems, economic change and institutional decisions are influencing opportunity, workforce readiness and career mobility across the continent.

The Think Tank is intended to move the Future of Work conversation beyond individual events. Over time, it is expected to support African-led research, knowledge products, collaborative learning, policy discourse and practical initiatives that help professionals and institutions respond to change with greater clarity, relevance and preparedness.





## LOOKING AHEAD: THE FUTURE OF WORK IN ACTION

The first year has clarified what The Career Café Africa has learned, and where the work can go next. Building on the conversations, partnerships and Future of Work convenings already held, the next phase is taking shape around practical career development and a broader continental conversation on the future of work in Africa.

## CAREER STRATEGY MASTERCLASS SERIES — UPCOMING

“Don’t Just Build a CV. Build a Career Strategy.” The Career Strategy Masterclass Series is a flagship programme of Career Café Africa and Global Health Otherwise, designed as a practical platform for career intelligence, leadership development, strategic networking, mentorship and future-of-work readiness.

The series is structured around four masterclasses annually, each running for approximately three hours and bringing together five speakers. It is intended for emerging, mid-career and established professionals, creating space for practical learning at different stages of the career journey.

The core themes include purpose and positioning; visibility and networking; leadership and organizational navigation; and AI, adaptability and the future of work. Together, these themes move beyond conventional job-search advice and focus on how professionals can build resilient, visible and purposeful careers in a changing economy.

**4 masterclasses annually | 3 hours each | 5 speakers per masterclass  
| Emerging, mid-career and established professionals**

## AFRICA FUTURE OF WORK SUMMIT — IN DEVELOPMENT

The Africa Future of Work Summit is being developed as a continental convening platform that will bring together professionals, employers, universities, policymakers, researchers, development institutions, and innovators to examine how Africa can prepare for the changing relationship between work, technology, skills, and opportunity.

The Summit is intended to grow from the Future of Work co-creation process already underway through The Career Café Africa convenings in Nairobi and Kigali. Rather than a one-off event, the vision is to create a recurring space where evidence, lived experience, and practical solutions can meet—connecting workforce realities with the institutions and decision-makers able to act on them.

Areas currently shaping the developing agenda include workforce readiness and skills relevance; artificial intelligence and digital transformation; education-to-employment transitions; leadership and institutional readiness; career mobility, professional value and lifelong learning; and African research, foresight and policy dialogue.

**Development window:** The Summit is currently being explored for either late 2026 or early 2027. The date, host city, partners and programme remain in development and will be communicated once formally confirmed.

The Masterclass Series and the Summit in development show the direction of the next phase: practical support for professionals now, alongside a larger platform for shaping how Africa thinks about and prepares for the future of work.

# OUR NEXT PHASE: 2026–2027

One year in, our direction is clearer. The Career Café Africa now has a tested mix of learning, community, regional presence, partnerships and Future of Work thinking. The next phase is about concentrating that mix where it can create the most value — and measuring it properly.

Rather than expanding for the sake of scale, the focus will be on programmes that can be delivered consistently, evaluated honestly and adapted across markets without losing local relevance.

## Partnership pathways

- **Hub partnership** — support a locally grounded Career Café hub with programming, community and employer engagement.
- **Professional learning pathway** — sponsor a structured masterclass or career-development programme with measurable participant outcomes.
- **Knowledge platform** — support the newsletter, digital resources, community infrastructure and public-access content.
- **Future of Work research** — support research, convenings, policy discourse and dissemination around skills, AI, workforce readiness and African labour-market transitions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our first year was shaped by people who donated their time, expertise, ideas, networks and trust to The Career Café Africa. We are deeply grateful to every speaker, moderator, facilitator, partner, participant, volunteer and collaborator who helped turn an idea into a growing community of conversation, learning and action.

### With appreciation

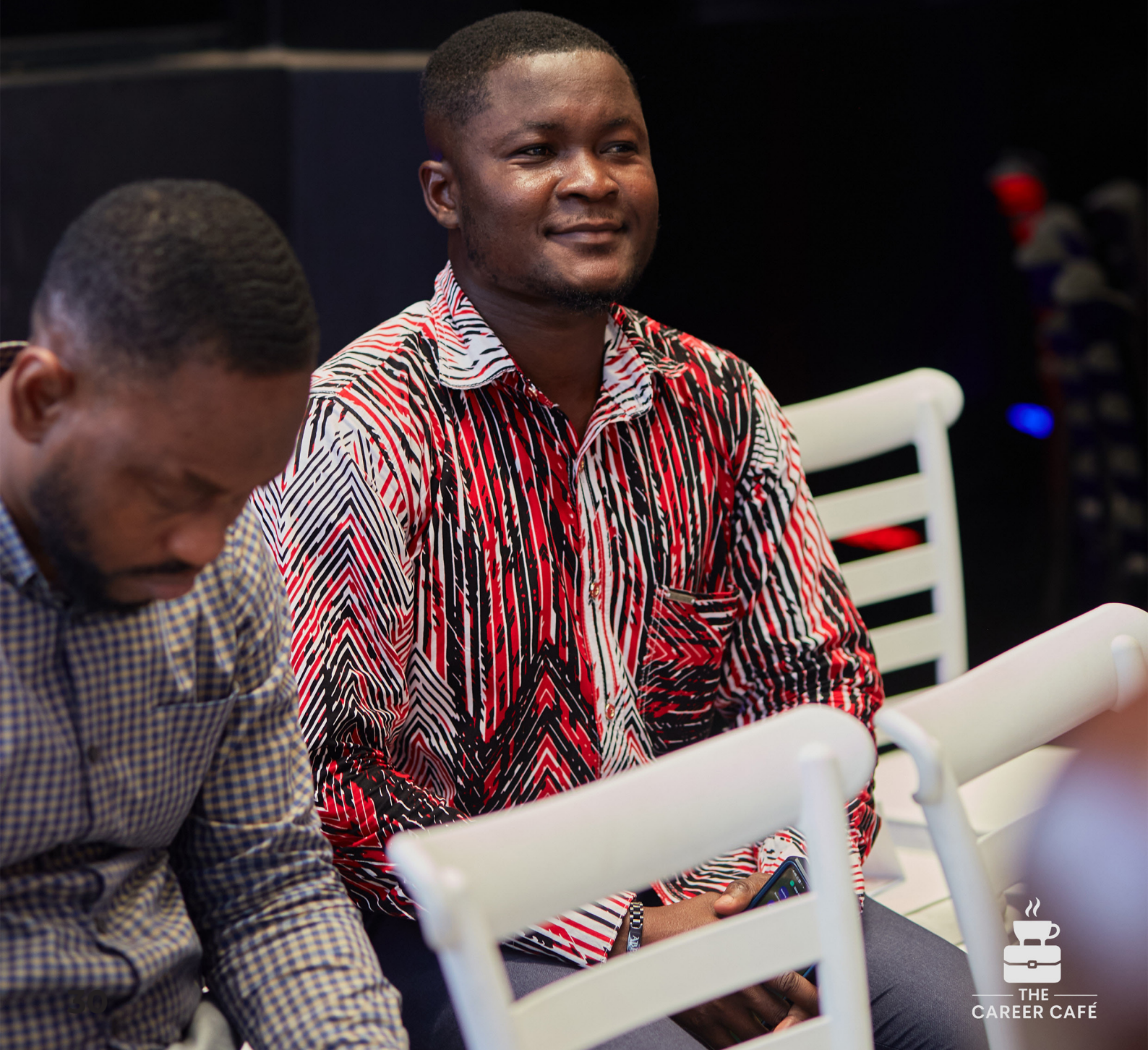
- |                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Nyimbi O.              | • Susan Nkengasong              |
| • Ouma O. Onyango        | • Dr Armand Mbanya              |
| • Zaha Indimuli          | • Mbeinta Lambert Chia, MPP     |
| • Alain Abeh, MD, MBA    | • Kanamugire Bicura Junior, MBA |
| • Dr Mary N. Okumu Jimoh | • Kabanga Roland                |
| • Tumelo Nkese           | • Samuel Iyokwizerwa            |
| • Dr Onduru Bruce Byron  | • Dr Luchuo Engelbert Bain      |
| • Piniel Nadege Ade      | • Philip Emase                  |
| • Dr Gift Malunga        | • Linda Mary                    |
| • Mabel Tsyawo           | • Stacy Maritim                 |
| • Grace Kibunja          | • Sarah Motlalepule Banda       |
| • Dr Obichi Obiajunwa    | • Lamech N. M.                  |
| • Prof. Keith Straughan  | • Ivy Sirikwa                   |



# Partnerships that helped carry the work forward

We extend our appreciation to CFAO Mobility Ghana, Global Health Otherwise, AG Expert Consult, and the International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED), as well as to the public, private, academic, civil-society and development institutions represented in our Nairobi and Kigali Future of Work conversations. Their participation, collaboration and willingness to contribute ideas helped broaden the reach and depth of this work.

And to every person who joined a room, logged into a webinar, shared a reflection, made an introduction or followed the conversation online: thank you. Your participation helped us test, refine and expand what The Career Café Africa can become





# THE CAREER CAFÉ

## CONNECT WITH THE CAREER CAFÉ AFRICA

Website: [careercafe.co.ke](http://careercafe.co.ke)

Email: [info@careercafe.africa](mailto:info@careercafe.africa)

Email: [careercafeke@gmail.com](mailto:careercafeke@gmail.com)

LinkedIn: The Career Café Africa

WhatsApp Channel: The Career Café Africa

Instagram: The Career Café Africa

