


APN Conversations with Young African Leaders: Purity Mumo

**Engaging young leaders
on a drive to
championing African
Philanthropy.**



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**YOUNG
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WITH
PURITY MUMO



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In this interview, Purity Mumo, the Communications Lead for the East Africa Philanthropy Network, shares her role in merging strategy with storytelling to create effective communication that inspires action. She believes that African philanthropy goes beyond financial contributions, emphasizing community, relationships, and long-term impact. Purity also highlights the story of Moesha Kibibi, a grassroots change-maker who has dedicated her life to helping vulnerable children. Purity discusses the potential for young people to drive youth philanthropy in Africa through the fusion of traditional giving systems with digital technology, the power of platforms like TikTok for grassroots movements, and the possibilities of Afrofuturism and blockchain in redefining philanthropy. She also acknowledges the challenges she faces in her role, such as tailoring communication strategies to diverse audiences, navigating the ever-evolving digital landscape, and measuring the impact of communication efforts. Despite these challenges, Purity remains committed to using communication as a tool for substantial change.

May you briefly tell us about yourself and the work that you do?

Absolutely. I am Purity Mumo, proud to serve as the Communications Lead for the East Africa Philanthropy Network. At the heart of my role is the belief that effective communication is a powerful tool for substantial change. Every day, I merge strategy with storytelling, designing narratives that resonate deeply with our diverse audience. Through strategic communication planning, I ensure our messages echo far and wide, creating ripples that inspire action. Engaging our stakeholders is not just a task for me—it is a dialogue, a partnership, where I learn as much as I impart. This dialogue extends to the media, where I navigate the multifaceted setting of media relations, ensuring our endeavors receive the positive spotlight they deserve. Moreover, in the age of digital dynamism, content is king. Whether it is an article, a tweet, or a press release, I oversee its birth, ensuring it not only informs but also inspires. Yet, no journey is without reflection. Through continuous monitoring and evaluation, I ensure our communication efforts are not just heard but felt, adjusting our sails as the winds of feedback direct. Every day at the East Africa Philanthropy Network is an opportunity for me to paint the canvas of change with the colors of communication.

What does African philanthropy mean to you, and how does philanthropy look like in your context?

African philanthropy is giving that rises above mere financial contributions, deeply rooted in traditions of community and Ubuntu — the belief in a universal bond that connects all humanity. It is the grandmother sharing tales with young ones under the moonlight, ensuring generational wisdom thrives. It is the village pooling resources for a child's education, understanding that the community's progress hinges on every individual's success. In my context, philanthropy is less about grand gestures and more about daily acts of solidarity. While global models of philanthropy often emphasize measurable outcomes and structured frameworks, African philanthropy defies this by stressing relationships, trust, and long-term community impact. However, as we evolve in a digitized age, blending this inherent communal giving spirit with innovative strategies can unlock a matchless philanthropic revolution. Imagine combining the age-old harambee spirit with modern crowdfunding platforms or using storytelling not just as a tool for preserving culture but also as a powerful medium for advocacy and resource mobilization. We stand on the cusp of redefining philanthropy, with Africa leading the charge, grounding it in heart, heritage, and innovation.

Could you please share a story that highlights how Youth Philanthropy is driving change in your community?

I am continually inspired by the grassroots change-makers in our communities, and one such story that remains etched in my heart is that of Moesha Kibibi. Many might remember her as a founding member of the acclaimed FBI dance crew, which clinched victory in Kenya's Sakata dance battle back in 2011. However, her dance moves, while impressive, are just a prelude to her greater life's dance of compassion and resilience. After tasting victory, instead of basking in the limelight, Kibibi extended her arms to embrace the vulnerable in our community. Starting with a handful, her determination has now fostered a family of over 2,500 young souls, some as young as 12. For Kibibi, philanthropy is not an occasional act but a lifelong commitment. With a heart as vast as the African plains, she has rented 15 homes across counties to shelter her extended family, ensuring they have access to basic needs, education, and healthcare.

However, her journey has not been a fairy-tale. In our chat, she shared heartfelt moments, revealing the hurdles she has faced - from naysayers implying she is chasing a fruitless dream, to grappling with personal traumas, including surviving a heinous act of rape. Yet, amid the storms, her spirit remains unbroken. Dancing now serves a dual purpose for Kibibi: an artistic expression and a means to fund her noble mission. Her endeavor, she confided, springs from her personal drive. Growing up in Majengo (a slum in Nairobi) and facing life's harsh realities after the loss of her parents, she saw her reflection in the eyes of every vulnerable child she met.

Kibibi's life story is a proof, a narrative she is flipping for her 2,500 'children', many of whom are thriving academically, giving her even more reasons to press forward. Seeing her interact with these children, radiating pure love and battling daily for their wellbeing, is a demonstration to her dedication. Witness her journey firsthand by following her on social media.

In your opinion, how can young people drive youth philanthropy in Africa?

In my contemplation on the dynamism of African youth, I have often found myself dropping towards several untapped avenues for amplifying our philanthropic spirit. Picture this: the fusion of traditional African giving systems like Kenya's Harambee or Nigeria's Osusu; with the modern aptitude of digital technology. There is an authenticity and resonance in such systems. Moreover, as we surge forward in this digital age, I am charmed by the potential of platforms like TikTok. These are not just entertainment channels; they are powerful tools for grassroots movements and digital storytelling. Can you imagine the surge of support if donors could intimately connect with the causes they are passionate about? Then there is Afrofuturism. It is not just a cultural aesthetic; it is a vision, a promise of a progressive Africa that beautifully marries our rich heritage with technological advancements.

Just think about the philanthropic possibilities that open up when we start thinking in terms of an Africa that is forward-looking, yet deeply rooted in its essence. Blockchain, for instance, can completely redefine transparency in giving. We can drive decentralized, community-led initiatives, shedding the bulky layers of bureaucracy, and making every coin, every dollar count.

In addition, speaking of innovation, why not have incubators for philanthropic ideas? Spaces where young minds come together, their altruistic visions nurtured and brought to life. You see, for me, it is all about reimagining. Reimagining philanthropy in an image that is in essence African, yet universal in its appeal.

What factors do you believe should be considered to grow Youth Philanthropy on the continent?

When reflecting on what is necessary to foster Youth Philanthropy's growth in Africa, it is impossible to ignore the pulse of the continent — its diverse stories and experiences. The Africa I know is vibrant and multi-layered. We must first appreciate this richness, understanding that every philanthropic effort needs to be both tailored and deeply connected to the communities we serve.

Our legacy bearers, the older generation, possess amazing lived experiences. The value of mentorship cannot be overstressed. We need spaces where the wisdom of the past interlocks with the enthusiasm of the present, paving a brilliant path for the future. This is not just about passing down knowledge, but about building connections, bridging gaps, and cultivating a shared vision.

Education plays a central role, and I am not merely speaking about classroom lessons. I mean a kind of education that plants seeds of curiosity about our ancestor's philanthropic endeavors, nourishing young minds to understand where we have been and envision where we could go.

This includes cultivating resilience, creativity, and a spirit of innovation among our young folks. The stage upon which these aspirations play out is crucial. Supportive structures that prioritize youth-led initiatives are non-negotiable. We need our leaders to not only listen but to act, creating policies that recognize the youth as vital contributors to our continent's narrative.

In addition, as we journey forward, let us not tread quietly. Every stride, every leap made by a young philanthropist, should be met with applause. It is these stories, these victories that inspire more to join the fold, building a symphony of change-makers, dreamers, and doers. The tale of Africa's future is one of promise, and the hands of its youthful visionaries write it.

Finally, could you share an inspiring quote about giving that resonates with you?

Since you have given me the platform, why not three quotes instead of one? Choices make life interesting, right. I recently stumbled upon an unexpected pot of wisdom within my notebook. For years, I carried it around without realizing that every page was adorned with a powerful quote! Here are three gems I would love to share:

The measure of a life is not in its duration, but in its donation.

To give is not just to make a difference in another's life, but to script a story that outlasts us.

Generosity is the music our souls dance to, even when the world forgets the tune.

So, pick the one that aligns with your spirit. It is proof that sometimes, insightful nuggets hide in plain sight! Asante Sana!