



# 2025 IMPACT REPORT

# Letter from the Board Chair

I have had the extraordinary privilege of watching the USAP Community School in Zimbabwe grow from a bold idea into a living, breathing testament to what education can mean in a uniquely African context. What began as a vision to nurture Zimbabwe's brightest young minds has become something far more profound, a tangible tool for liberation through education.

From the beginning, I observed that USAP was never simply about academic excellence. It was about possibility. It was about asking what happens when gifted, low-income Zimbabwean students are not merely admitted to elite spaces abroad, but are first grounded in a community that sees them fully. As the USAP Community took shape, I witnessed education move beyond the classroom and into the realm of communal transformation.

The premise of the USAP Community School is rooted in Quaker tenets that have shaped Friends schools around the world for generations. In Zimbabwe's context, this communal model of education feels profoundly aligned with African traditions. Education here is not an individual escape; it is a collective uplift. When one student rises, families are strengthened. When families are strengthened, communities stabilize. When communities stabilize, countries begin to heal and flourish.

I have seen parents stand taller because their children are thriving. I have seen alumni return not only with degrees, but also with a commitment to contribute to Zimbabwe's future. I have seen a community school become a seedbed for national possibility.

My deepest thanks to our visionary founder and leader, Rebecca Zeigler Mano, whose courage and clarity gave birth to this movement. To our first chair, Ambassador Bruce Wharton, whose steady leadership helped anchor the early years. To former Board chair Lucy Steinitz, whose wisdom and dedication strengthened the foundation. And to our current chair, Ann Kuhlman, whose leadership continues to guide Education Matters forward with integrity and heart. Without this circle of leadership, Education Matters would not be thriving.

To witness the USAP Community grow has been to witness education reclaim its highest calling of not only providing credentials to individuals, but also liberating minds and uplifting communities to contribute to the flourishing of a nation.

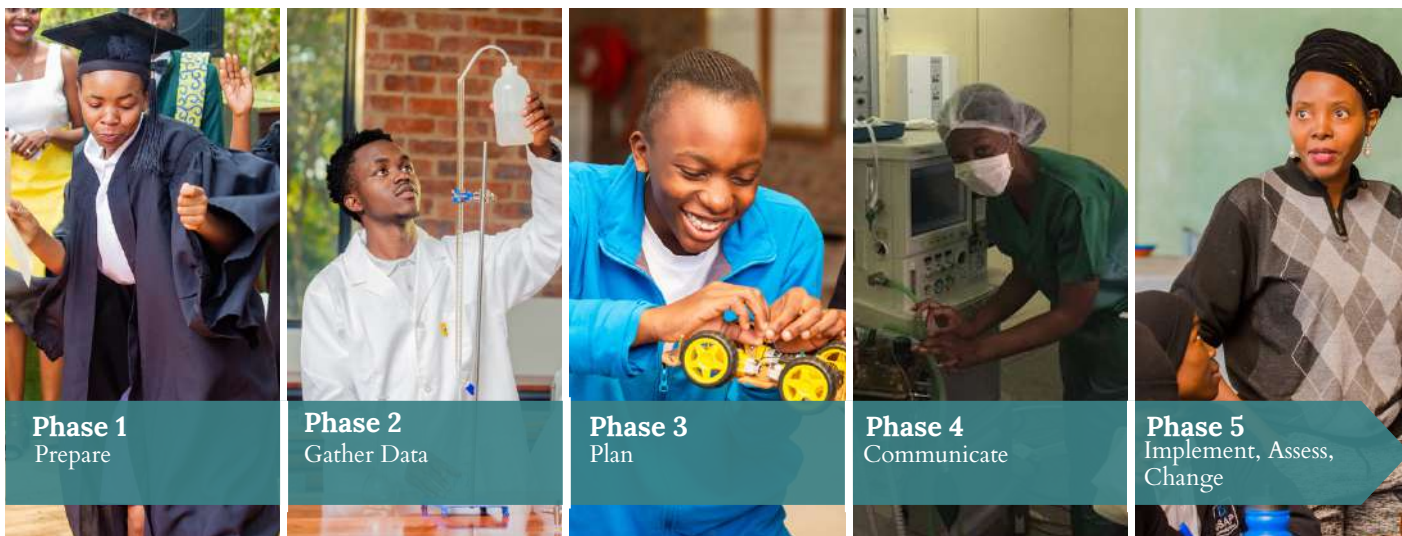


**Lois Mufuka Martin,**  
2025 Chair,  
Board of Education Matters Africa Foundation



# Five Year Strategic Plan

The Strategic Planning Process took place over 10 months. The process was led by the Board with input from alumni, faculty/staff, students, colleges/universities, employers, other stakeholders through focus groups, surveys, and one-on-one interviews. The Strategic Plan spans an intensive implementation phase over the first three years to 2028, that may be extended to 2030 over 5 years, with adjustments and updates.



## Goal 1: Programming

Provide a transformative education through USAPCS and with alumni for global success and leadership in Africa.

## Goal 2: Financial Sufficiency

Ensure financial sustainability to support growth and protect the mission of Education Matters.

## Goal 3: Organizational Structure

Undertake a healthy organizational evolution to adapt EMAF's structure, systems, responsibilities, documentation, capabilities, and processes in line with changing conditions and needs.

## Goal 4: Branding and Communication

Enhance communication strategies to amplify and strengthen stakeholder engagement





# USAP at 25

In 2025, we marked 25 years of USAP changing lives, shaping futures, and proving that indeed Education Matters. To celebrate this incredible milestone, we turned the spotlight on our inspiring alumni, passionate Education Matters supporters, and global USAP family and friends. USAP is a community which spans over two decades of global access, academic excellence, professional impact, resilience, and the powerful bonds among the USAP family.

## Annual USAP Run/Walk

The 2025 Run/Walk on September 21, was a resounding success, with 16 global events marking 25 years of the USAP Program. Alumni, students, and supporters attended the Run/Walk at the USAP Community School Campus, as well as in various cities in Canada, Ghana, India, Kenya, the UK, and the USA.



*USAP Community School Run/Walk*



*USAP in New York*



*USAP in Chicago*

As part of the 2025 Run/Walk, Tafadzwa Muguwe (USAP '2000) ran the Cambridge Half Marathon to fundraise for the USAP Community School.



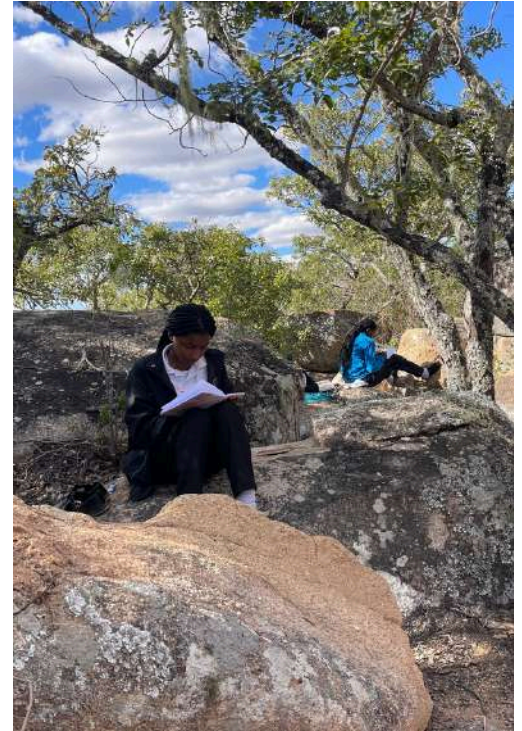
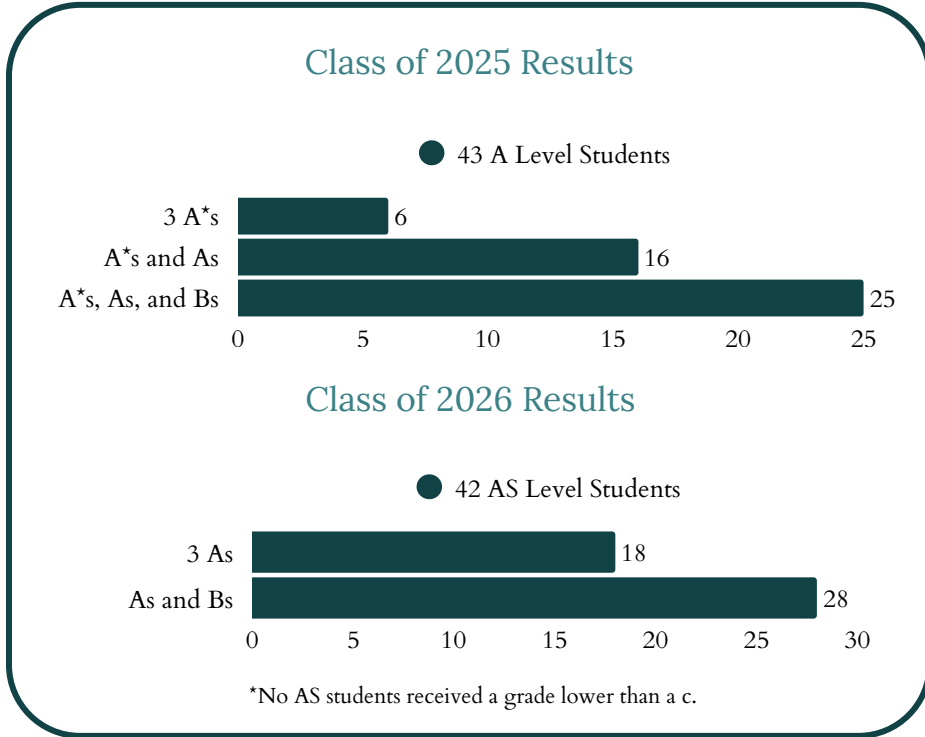
*Alumni Spotlight*

The United Students Achievers Program (USAP) was originally launched in 1999 by our Director, Rebecca Zeigler Mano, then the EducationUSA Country Coordinator at the U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe. USAP began with the aim of providing access to higher education for determined, bright, low-income youth, producing highly-skilled and liberally-educated leaders for tomorrow's Zimbabwe. USAP transformed from a college access program to its current residential high school in 2020.



*USAP at 25 Launch Event*

In 2025, the USAP Community School students worked diligently on their academics, along with all their co-curricular activities. The students excelled academically, and their Cambridge AS and A Level results were a reflection of their commitment to their academic success.



**US\$ 9,174,512**  
in Needs Based Financial Aid received for university by the USAP Community School Class of 2024.

**Germany:** Constructor University. **Ghana:** Ashesi University. **India:** Ashoka University. **Italy:** Bocconi University. **South Africa:** University of Pretoria. **UAE:** NYU Abu Dhabi. **UK:** Oxford/Ellison. **USA:** Amherst College, Barnard College, Bates College, Berea College, Brown University, Dartmouth College, Davidson College, Lander University, Morehouse College, Northwestern University, Oberlin College, Pomona College, Princeton University, Rochester University, Smith College, University of Connecticut, University of Pennsylvania, Vanderbilt University, Warren Wilson College, Wellesley College, Wilmington College, Yale University.



## Sciences at USAP

USAP Community School students participated in various science fairs and hackathons over the past year. Students received two silver medals, two gold medals, and three special awards at the 2025 Zimbabwe Science Fair. We also entered the 2025 Africa Science Buskers Festival and won three bronze medals, four silver medals, and one gold medal. Alberto Ndebele (USAP '26) who won the gold medal also made it to the top three overall for the African Science Buskers Festival, and earned the prestigious Broadcom Award.

Alumni Spotlight



Keith Tamwa (USAP '24) was selected as an inaugural Ellison Scholar, a new prestigious scholarship that provides full funding for studies at the University of Oxford alongside with intensive STEM research aimed at addressing global “humane endeavors”. For Keith, being selected was a pivotal moment in his journey, offering him the chance to collaborate on transformative projects with some of the brightest minds in the world. He is one of 20 undergraduate scholars chosen for the pioneering class out of over 2,000 applicants worldwide, and he was the only Ellison Scholar selected from sub-Saharan Africa in the first two years of the program, underscoring his exceptional potential and unique perspective. *Keith is pictured with Tony Blair of the Ellison Institute.*

## USAP in the Arts

In 2025 the arts programming at USAP expanded and students excelled. USAPella won the African Voices Cup for Best Senior School Acapella Ensemble at the National Institute of Allied Arts (NIAA) Music Festival in March, selected from 2,000 overall entries. Amarachi Ojukwu (USAP '25) won a national prize in the Literary Arts Festival for seniors, and Ashbett Muteiwa's (USAP '25) painting was highly commended in the Visual Arts Festival and was exhibited at the NIAA ceremony.



## Waterhole Millionaire Entrepreneur Program

The Class of 2025 spent two weeks after A levels learning the core principles of financial literacy, entrepreneurship, design thinking and innovation. Students had an opportunity to apply their knowledge in a business pitch competition, with students pitching ideas addressing mental health, food waste management, accessible development, and health issues.



## 2025 TEXPO Hackathon

Out of over 40 blind applications without school names, three out of eight finalist teams for the national 2025 TEXPO Hackathon were from USAP Community School, showcasing the hard work all the teams put into their projects. The TEXPO Hackathon was a resounding success, bringing together talented individuals from diverse backgrounds to innovate, create, and solve complex tech-problems.

Wiseman Makore (USAP '25) took 1st place out of 91 archers at a national Bullseye archery competition with a score of 288/300. Wiseman went on to represent the Zimbabwe National Archery Team at an international tournament in Namibia and received an award as the most improved male archer nationally.



Alumni Spotlight

# USAP Bridge

In November, we launched the USAP Bridge Program with the USAP Community School Class of 2025, our unique bridging program between USAPCS graduation and university enrolment. The USAP Bridge program includes college preparation, community engagement, work experience, leadership training, and personal development to ensure students have skills needed to thrive in university. Students apply to and are selected to participate in one of four programs:



## Capstone Fellowship

Capstone Fellows implement their Capstone Projects in their home communities with support from the Education Matters' Programs team, aiming to make a measurable impact on the challenges they researched for their capstone project during their final year at school.

In 2025, 9 Capstone fellows implemented projects in Budiro, Masvingo, Kutama, Chiredzi, Mutare, Ushewekunze, Murambinda and Tongogara Refugee Settlement. These 8 communities were impacted by 8,640 community service hours logged by the fellows.



## Zimpact Schools Initiative

Zimpact Fellows receive training in pedagogy and teaching philosophy, tied to the history of the ZIMFEP teachers movement during Zimbabwe's independence. A new program for Education Matters, Zimpact fellows will work in under-resourced schools around Zimbabwe to support teaching and extracurricular activities, sharing what they have learned at USAPCS.



## Education Matters' Internships

Education Matters' interns have the opportunity to learn more about non-profit organizational management and take on operations and administrative tasks allowing them to build professional skills while supporting the work of the Education Matters office.



## USAP Community School Junior Faculty

Junior Faculty will have the opportunity to grow their educator skills in a specific subject, while also taking on residential and co-curricular responsibilities on our campus.





## PIEoneer Award Winner

USAP Community School was honoured to receive the PIEoneer award for Secondary School International Innovation. This award celebrates schools redefining education to nurture creativity, STEM talent, and global citizenship. The 2025 PIEoneer Award Dinner, hosted at the Guildhall in London on September 5th, honoured innovators shaping education around the world. Neil Wary (Former USAP Community School Teacher and Princeton in Africa Fellow) and Blossom Tariro Kafumbata (USAP Class of 2018) received the PIEoneer award in London on behalf of the USAP Community School.

“USAP Community School transforms the lives of high-achieving, low-income Zimbabwean and refugee students through rigorous, holistic education. With a focus on purpose, community impact, and global access, students gain the skills, values, and confidence to attend top universities and return as changemakers across Zimbabwe and the African continent.”  
 –Neil Wary, Former USAPCS Teacher



## World's Best Schools Finalist

USAP Community School was named a Top 10 Finalist for the World's Best School Prize for Innovation 2025, presented by T4 Education! The World's Best School Prizes are awarded across five categories: Community Collaboration, Environmental Action, Innovation, Overcoming Adversity, and Supporting Healthy Lives. Ten Finalists are selected for each category, and USAP Community School was selected as as Finalist for Innovation for our Capstone Program, the first Zimbabwean school shortlisted for this prize.



# Zimbabwe Career Connect

2025 marked the 10th year of Zimbabwe Career Connect program, partnering Zimbabwean and refugee students studying abroad with local companies for two month career-building internships during their university holidays. Interns in our 10th cohort gained invaluable experience working on ongoing projects and learning more about the organization, as well as the work culture in Zimbabwe. Interns also implemented and worked on a project for change at their work site to further support their learning and create lasting change.

18

Interns

14

Partner  
Organisations

## 2025 Internship Partner Organisations

AiBST, Ascon Africa, CHAI, Ecocash, Econet Wireless, Ecosurgica, Emergination Africa, Innbucks Microbank, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, Nyirenda Engineering, Simbisa Brands, Solar Energy Projects, UnCommon.org, ViRL Financials

We also announced the expansion of the Zimbabwe Career Connect program to now include job placements, graduate traineeships, and an additional two cohorts annually for internships.

Alumni  
Spotlight



Trymore Kunjenjema (USAPCS '21) interned at Nyirenda Engineering, an engineering firm started by another USAP Alum.

“As a USAP Community School Alumni from the Class of 2021, I have also witnessed, directly, the construction of Phase Two for the school. I am happy that I was part of the Engineering firm working on the project.”

## Africa Career Networks

Our partnership with Africa Career Networks (ACN) to amplify our already existing goal of accelerating internationally educated Zimbabweans into careers of impact had a very successful inaugural year in 2025. Representatives from the Education Matters team presented and led workshops at the ACN Regional Event in May, hosted in Harare. In addition, the ACN retreat in November 2025 was another opportunity to learn from the ACN community and network with other ACN partners and delegates. We successfully renewed our ACN grant for 2026.



Some of the successes made possible by the first year of the ACN grant included:

- 115 program participants recruited
- 6 professional development and career readiness courses were held
- 40 total placements inclusive of internships, job placements and sector challenge (*a collaborative challenge to propose and implement practical solutions to an organization's real problem*)
- 25 one-on-one coaching sessions were delivered

# TWEENS

TWEENS (Together We Educationally Empower Non-Privileged Students) was started in 2020 by five USAP students who saw a gap in education in Tongogara Refugee Settlement. TWEENS has grown in the past five years to be arguably the most vibrant refugee-led education and youth organization in Tongogara.

Education Matters and TWEENS successfully closed out the U.S. Embassy-Julia Taft grant on July 3rd at Tongogara Refugee Settlement, Chipinge. A year earlier, TWEENS was responding to an educational crisis when scholarships dried up and refugee youth were left without a path beyond O-Level. But through this grant, belief and collaboration, we built something real and lasting, the first A level program in Tongogara Refugee Settlement. TWEENS' progress in 2025 also: 82% TWEENS A-Level students excelled in their end of year exams, with an 82% pass rate in the first year of A-level classes.



- Increased girls' participation in after-school programs such as the Book club and Big sister little sister mentorship
- Supported 20+ refugee-led businesses and built an A level classroom that seats 30 students with desks and around 50 chairs at capacity
- Reached over 2,100 refugees with awareness campaigns on the value of keeping their children in school.
- Doubled volunteer tutors at the TWEENS center

TWEENS gave young people a reason to keep dreaming.

Ancilla Nyirema (USAP '23) is the TWEENS Secretary and has been creating impact in her community since her graduation. Ancilla started a book club at TWEENS as well as coordinating the Big Sister - Little Sister Program that she started under the Julia Taft Grant.

“When I went to USAP in the first year we were taught to go back and give back to our communities, and so when I came back I was like ‘What can I do?’ and that’s how I started tutoring at TWEENS.”



Alumni Spotlight

# Financial Report

<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$769,594</b>
Education Matters Africa Foundation Funds Raised	\$540,052
Zimbabwean Corporate Donations	\$73,953
In-kind Donations	\$13,953
School Fees Collected	\$32,280
Restricted Grants for Education Matters Programs	\$78,338
Local Cash Donations/Local Fundraising	\$31,018

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$758,638</b>
USAP Community School Operations	\$571,414
EdMatters Programs and Office Support	\$187,224

<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$10,956</b>
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*Education Matters Africa Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization registered in the United States of America with EIN 82-4727381.*



We would like to extend out heartfelt gratitude to our donors who have provided financial and in-kind support to Education Matters and USAP Community School to support this work. We would like to acknowledge major donors:

African Career Networks  
African Portfolio Team  
Andreata Muforo  
Baldwin Guchu  
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Jean Mufuka

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Margaret S. Zeigler  
OAK Foundation  
Roy Turner Trust  
Sabastian Mugazambi  
Simbisa Brands  
WUSC Grant for TWEENS

We also extend our gratitude to our Education Matters Africa Foundation Board Members for their tireless dedication to supporting the Education Matters mission and the staff team.

**2025 Board Chair:** Lois Mufuka Martin

**Past Chair:** Lucy Steinitz

**2025 Chair Elect/Secretary:** Ann Kuhlman

**Treasurer:** Farai Sanyangore

Andreata Muforo  
Baldwin Guchu  
D. Bruce Wharton  
Diane Ebzery Lobel  
Esther Nwaka  
James Linville  
Kevin Burns





## Get Involved



### Share our mission

Support us by amplifying the work we do. You can follow or share our website and/or social media information to help us reach a wider network of young people who may benefit from our programming opportunities, ranging from USAP Community School candidates to job placements for university graduates.



### Partner with us

Are you able to host a student for an internship? Or hire a graduate for a graduate traineeship or full-time employment? We are always looking to partner with organisations in Zimbabwe to implement our mission of empowering youth in Zimbabwe to pursue careers of impact locally.



### Share your knowledge

Alumni, professional speakers, and creatives are invited to speak to our students at the USAP Community School, or program participants for the Zimbabwe Career Connect program, to share their expertise, stories, and advice with young people in Zimbabwe who can gain insight and inspiration from these stories.



### Give to support our mission

Donations to support our work are greatly appreciated. Visit [edmatterafrica.org/donate](https://edmatterafrica.org/donate) to learn more about how you can donate or fundraise to support the work we do through cash or in-kind donations to Education Matters Africa Foundation.





## Letter from the Director

2025 presented immense challenges for international education and exchange. For USAP '24 students who had been accepted and funded to enroll at colleges and universities in the United States, these challenges meant U.S. visa appointments “paused” and ultimately cancelled multiple times, and coming together to plan visa road trips to Maputo, Mozambique and Windhoek, Namibia to secure visas in time for August start dates at U.S. universities. Three students were not able to board planes in time for their Fall semesters, and so went through a rigorous visa process in the then assigned consulate in Johannesburg, spending a month waiting for their stamped passports in South Africa and ultimately reaching their universities just in time for Spring Semester in January.

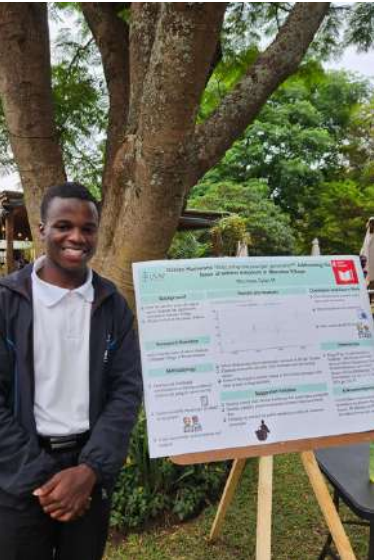
While the Class of 2025 celebrated Early Decision admission results, the devastating news came on December 16 that Zimbabweans, among citizens of 25 mostly African countries, alongside refugees, were no longer allowed to be granted student visas or enter the United States. Overnight, as the U.S. higher education door slammed shut, and we started to redouble our efforts to seek fully funded scholarships in other quality universities at home in Zimbabwe, elsewhere in Africa and around the globe. We are hopeful that our students, enticed by the freedom of future afforded by a liberal arts education, will be able to secure admission and financial aid with wonderful new opportunities locally and globally.

At this challenging time in our world history and for our students, we appreciate and invite your support more than ever. It is clear to us that education has the power to transform the trajectories of our students, their families and their communities. Education does matter, now more than ever.

Gratefully,

**Rebecca Zeigler Mano**  
Executive Director,  
Education Matters Africa Foundation







# Transforming Lives Through Access to Quality Education


We empower exceptional students in Zimbabwe's underserved communities with the skills, networks, and global opportunities to become changemakers across Africa and beyond.






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