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Professor Bitange Ndemo joins top Kenyan accelerator's supervisory board to support its African expansion

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Kenya's former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication, newspaper columnist and currently professor of entrepreneurship at the University of Nairobi's Business School, ICT and development enthusiast Professor Bitange Ndemo joins GrowthAfrica's supervisory board as an independent director. A huge move for 17-year-old business accelerator working with post-revenue, high-impact, high-growth businesses that innovatively contribute to Africa's social and economic progress.

The move will see Prof. Bitange continue to directly impact the entrepreneurial ecosystem through his contribution to GrowthAfrica's Supervisory board, which is dedicated to ensuring that the organisation delivers value to entrepreneurs and all stakeholders responsibly, consistently and sustainably.



Professor Bitange Ndemo brings to GrowthAfrica a wealth of knowledge and experience that includes his research work which centres on the link between ICT and SMEs with emphasis on how ICT influence economic development in Africa. Prof. Ndemo is also the Chairman of Kenya's Distributed Ledgers and Artificial Intelligence Taskforce developing a road map for the country's digital transformation.

Apart from GrowthAfrica, Professor Ndemo is also an advisor and board member to several organisations including Safaricom, a leading telecommunications company in Africa, a member of the Global Learning Council, World Economic Forum's Blockchain Council and Research ICT Africa based in South Africa. He has been credited with facilitating many transformative ICT projects during his tenure as Kenya's Minister of Information and Communication. He is a Senior Advisor to UN's Global Pulse (Big Data initiatives) and the UNCDF's Better than Cash Alliance, an Open Data/Big Data evangelist and is dedicated to simplification (visualisation) of data for ordinary citizens to consume. He writes two columns every week for the Business Daily and Nation on-line.

Professor. Bitange Ndemo joins a supervisory board constituting a group of professionals with vast experience and different backgrounds who share in the organisation's vision. Meet the team of board members who exercise enterprise leadership, integrity and judgement in supporting GrowthAfrica achieve continued success in its stakeholder engagement.

**Dr. Niels Arnfred – Board Chair**

Dr. Niels is an experienced advisor with a demonstrated history of working in the higher education industry. He is skilled in negotiations, analytical skills, coaching for nonprofit organisations and entrepreneurship. He has worked with Mount Kenya university (Kenya and Rwanda campuses), Inoorero University IEEC, Copenhagen Business School, and as the CEO of Scandinavian International Management Institute (SIMI), Copenhagen.

Dr. Niels is an accomplished professional with a degree in Political Science followed by additional education in business leadership from Scandinavian International Management Institute.

Ritesh Doshi – Independent Director



Chief Executive Officer at Spring Valley coffee, founded in 2009, Ritesh is a seasoned entrepreneur with over 12 years of investment banking experience across the world, mainly in the United Kingdom, London and the middle east. Before following his passion as an entrepreneur, Ritesh worked for organisations like HSBC, bought, restructured & sold a human resources business in London; helped corporates enter Rwanda; advised the US government on business development in South Sudan; and provided operational, strategic & succession advice to Kenyan corporates.

Ritesh is behind the famous Naked Pizza, Nairobi, franchised from a US-based global fast food giant, which was later acquired by Pizza Hut. He also founded Juicebox, is an active angel investor (BookNow, OkHi & EcoPallets), and serves on the Board of Tropical Heat.

Ms. Esther Ndeti – Independent Director



Esther Ndeti is an Executive Director at the East Africa Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (EAVCA), a firm that raises awareness & engages on regional policy matters on behalf of investors as well as the mobilisation of capital flows in the region.

Esther has a track record of success in the region’s investment & SME sector with a focus on program management, fundraising and business development. Prior to joining EAVCA, Esther worked for the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) where she coordinated ANDE’s activities in East Africa.

Ms. Ndeti displays strong faith in the power of entrepreneurship to create and deploy solutions that meet the needs of society, through her role as a mentor on the GIZ Make-IT Mentorship Program. She serves as an advisor on the Global Steering Group for Impact Investing (Kenya Taskforce) and also seats on the Management Board of the Association of Start-Up and SME Enablers in Kenya (ASSEK).

Esther has also trodden the entrepreneur road by previously founding a thriving business in the food production sector and another in the events management space. Esther is both founder & host of Nairobi’s popular storytelling community, Hadithi Njoo, and has been featured as a noteworthy leader on the annual list of Top 40 under 40 Women in Kenya.

Mr. Johnni Kjelsgaard – Executive Director



Johnni is the Chief Executive Director at GrowthAfrica, an accelerator working with entrepreneurs and growth ventures for the past 17 years in Africa. Johnni has been working with entrepreneurs and businesses for growth in Africa since the late 90’ties as an entrepreneur, consultant, investor, advisor and mentor. Based on this accumulation of knowledge and market insights, Johnni and his team have developed a number of tools, products and services for African entrepreneurs, local businesses expanding across Africa, and international companies entering Africa. All with the objective of securing economic progress and social transformation.

Johnni is chairman to ANDE East Africa Steering committee and a member of the EO, Entrepreneurs’ Organisation board of Directors.

Ms. Kanana Mwiti-Njuguna - GrowthAfrica employee representative



Kanana is a Project Catalyst at GrowthAfrica and has over 8years’ experience garnered in the dynamic enterprise development ecosystem. Her experience spans from marketing, not-for-profit and consultancy sectors.

Kanana has managed projects supported by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Swedish Mission Council (SMC), Danish Mission Development Department (DMCDD), USAID, NUFFIC, UN Women and International Trade Centre (ITC).

Mr. Gitahi Ng'ang'a- GrowthAfrica entrepreneur representative



Gitahi is the Managing Director, Hoji, a mobile data collection and analysis platform for social and market research. Hoji provides easy-to-use, powerful and professionally supported software solutions for surveys, assessments and M&E. Gitahi is an entrepreneur alumnus at GrowthAfrica through Hoji which was one of the ventures going through the GrowthAfrica Accelerator, Kenya cohort 2018. He is the entrepreneur voice in the board and is responsible for ensuring all GrowthAfrica entrepreneurs receive desired value from the Accelerator and post-programme support.

About GrowthAfrica

Since 2012 GrowthAfrica has accelerated more than 200 African ventures and from inception in 2002, worked with over 2,000 growing African businesses, supported in raising over USD 60 million in Investments, loans and grants, and created more than 30,000 jobs in Africa. GrowthAfrica works with growth-oriented entrepreneurs running post revenue ventures and has offices in Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Zambia and Ghana

For more information on the accelerator programme and more news items please write to the Communications Lead Liz Kariuki on eka@growthafrica.com or call +254 (0) 735 283 462

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Please Note: GrowthAfrica is spelled as a single word with a Capital G and a Capital A