Africa Creator Economy

2026 Report 2.0

THE BUSINESS OF CREATIVITY:

FUNDING AND SUSTAINING AFRICAN CREATORS

2026

THE BUSINESS OF CREATIVITY: FUNDING AND SUSTAINING AFRICAN CREATORS

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FOREWORD

ELIJAH AFFI

Creative Director, TM Global

Every generation asks itself one question in a different way: how do we make our work last?
Across Africa, creators are beginning to ask this question. Not in pursuit of virality or visibility, but sustainability. How do we build careers that are not only expressive but enduring? How do we convert our talents into tools for long-term growth, and how do we ensure that we are not simply chasing trends but shaping futures?

This year's Africa Creator Economy Report is centred on sustainability. Not the kind that's only measured in carbon credits or green investments, but the deeply human kind; the sustainability of the creator. Their skills, their opportunities, and their income. Because if creators are to thrive, they need more than platforms. They need systems.

Talent is the beginning, but not the end. Without structure, it fades. Without mentorship, it repeats mistakes. And without training, it eventually reaches a ceiling. As we have found in our work across the continent, the most consistent difference between those who survive and those who stall is not raw potential but support.

We have also come to realise that the African creator economy does not need to look like anyone else's. Some of the most successful creators are not those with the largest followings, but rather those who have discovered and served a clear niche, such as food creators in local languages, artisans preserving indigenous crafts, and tech reviewers speaking directly to the continent's youth. These are not just stories. They are models. They are proof that small can be smart and niche can be powerful.

And then there is money. Many creators are still chasing the same narrow paths—brand deals, influencer campaigns, and sometimes, just exposure. But creativity is commerce. It must be treated as such. We need platforms that pay fairly, systems that protect rights, and education that shows creators how to earn without burning out.

If we are serious about the future of Africa's creative economy, then we must go beyond celebration to infrastructure. We must advocate for policy. We must fund creative education. We must build better platforms and demand better partnerships.

This report does not pretend to have all the answers. But it does offer a mirror and a map to reflect on where we are, and a direction on where we might go.

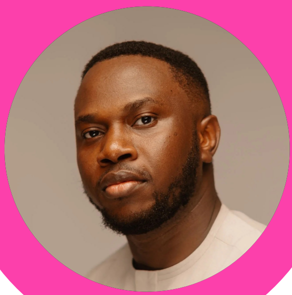
Let it be a reminder: African creativity is not a resource to be mined. It is a gift to be grown.

Let us grow it well.

MESSAGE

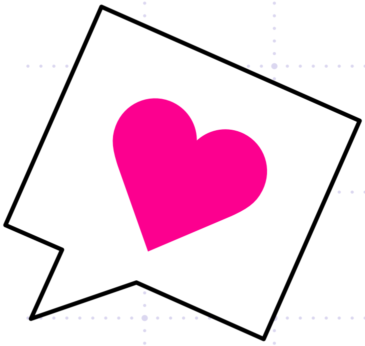
from **David I. Adeleke**

Founder & CEO, Communiqué



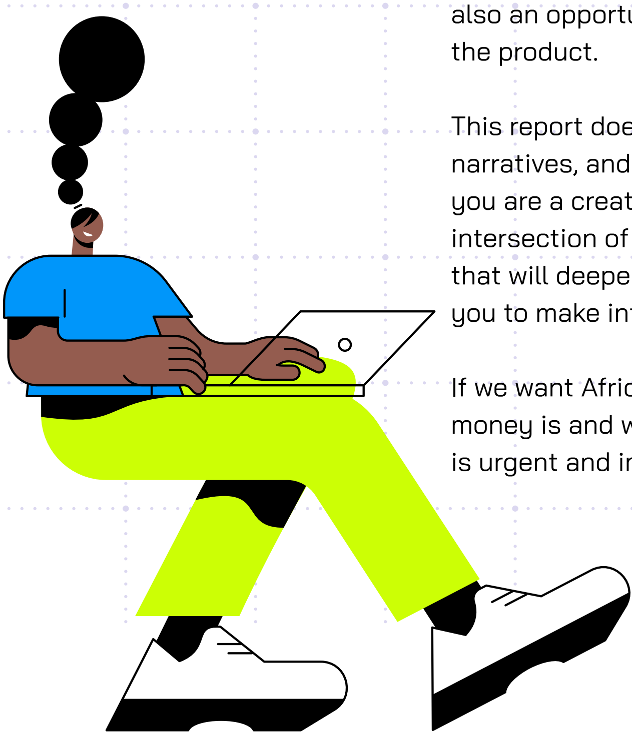
The African creator economy is brimming with potential. Over the past few years, we have witnessed a surge in creators, a growing audience, and numerous headlines touting the promise of African storytelling and digital talent. In our previous report, we contributed to this discussion by clarifying who these creators are.

But a promise is not proof. And for creators to move beyond hype and narrative into real economic power, we must answer one question plainly: Who is willing to invest in them?



This new report explores that question in depth. It examines who is investing in African creators and how much they are investing. It also takes a harder look at the creators themselves. Are they investable? By 'investable', we mean do they have the structures, scale potential, and business clarity that capital seeks? Are we romanticising the creator boom, or are we witnessing a sector that is genuinely building the scaffolding for long-term economic viability?

These are not easy questions. The creator economy, particularly in Africa, is still in its early stages of development. Many creators are bootstrapping their way through a system that does not quite know how to value them. At the same time, investors are struggling to make sense of an ecosystem that feels culturally rich but commercially ambiguous. There is a risk, but there is also an opportunity to rethink what investment looks like when creativity is the product.



This report does not claim to have all the solutions. However, it offers data, narratives, and frameworks that could reshape the conversation. Whether you are a creator, an investor, a policymaker, or simply intrigued by the intersection of culture and capital in Africa, this report is a valuable resource that will deepen your understanding of the current landscape and empower you to make informed decisions.

If we want African creators to win, we must get serious about where the money is and what it is actually doing. This is not just a matter of interest; it is urgent and important.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The African Creator Economy Report 2.0 was made possible through the generosity, collaboration, and commitment of a broad community of partners and contributors. We extend our sincere thanks to our research partners, **TechCabal Insights** and **Creative Nestlings**, whose support and willingness were critical to shaping the reach and impact of this work. We are also deeply grateful to our ecosystem partner, **TikTok**, for opening up access to its network of creators across the continent and enabling the interviews that brought real-world perspectives and nuance to this report.

Most importantly, we thank the creators across Africa who took the time to respond to our survey, speak with us, and share their experiences and insights so openly. Your voices are the foundation of this report. We also acknowledge the researchers, analysts, and contributors who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, as well as the wider team across **Communiqué** and **TM Global** whose tireless efforts brought this project to life. This report is a community effort, and we are grateful to everyone who made it possible.

KEY FINDINGS

1. 55.8% of African creators have fewer than 10,000 followers.

2. About six in ten creators earn less than US$100 per month from their creative work.

3. For the top earners, product sales (digital and physical merchandise) are the top source of income for African creators (29%), followed by brand sponsorships (~28%) and platform payouts (i.e., ad revenue and streaming royalties) (~11%).

4. Only 4.2% of creators surveyed have received institutional investments.

5. Over 50% of our respondents report never receiving external funding, and 60% report not actively seeking it.

6. Lack of access to investors is the top reason listed for not actively seeking funding. Notably, ~79% listed government grants and awards as a source of external financing that they know they can access.

7. Meanwhile, for those who have received funding, the top three sources were family and friends (25%), proceeds from brand partnerships (25%), and grants (10.8%).

8. Many African creators still treat their work as a side hustle or hobby rather than a business.
   a. Based on our survey, about 40% still consider it a part-time job;

   b. 71% identified “Business strategy and management” as one of the three skills they believe are essential to help attract investments; and

   c. About 40% consider “Business skills training” as important to their sustainability as creators.

In Their Words: Reflections from Leaders Shaping the Creator Economy

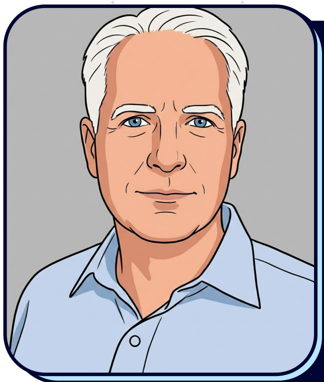
Reader Reactions: How industry leaders contextualise the findings from the report.

"As the creator economy in Africa matures from a nascent ecosystem into a robust business sector and a primary engine for cross-industry growth, the need for market insights and empirical data has never been more critical. This report serves as a pivotal contribution to that transition, providing an analytical foundation necessary to turn cultural influence into measurable economic impact".

Ojoma Ochai, Managing Director, Co-Creation Hub (CcHUB)

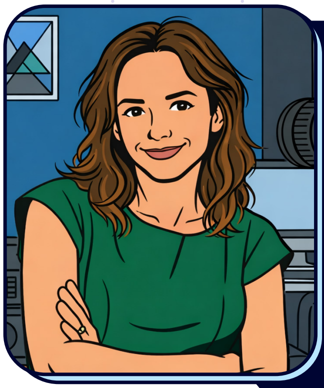
"Africa is emerging as a key creator hotspot globally, but there's little comprehensive data about the breadth of creators, type of content and maturity of the market. This report delivers an invaluable look at how African creators fit into the global creator landscape and delivers an invaluable resource for investors, brands and creators themselves!"

Jim Louderback, CEO & Editor, Inside the Creator Economy



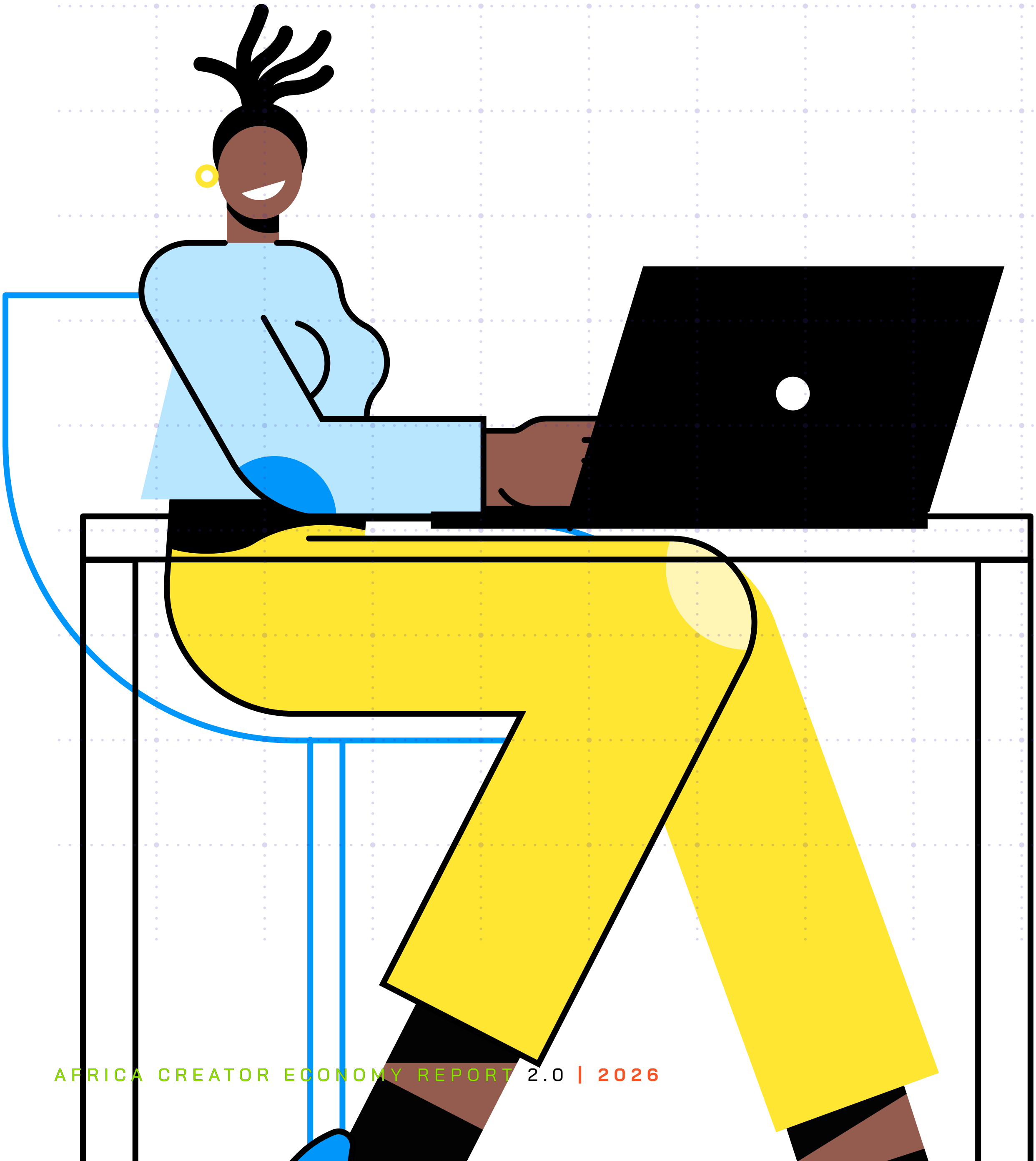
"Who will be Africa's Mr Beast? Any market to move beyond developing to fully-emerged requires verifiable hits and hitmakers, especially in the Creator Economy. This latest report confirms the supply of talent across the continent exists, but underscores that demand must also come with fan payments for the individual Creators and their communities to thrive. Being investable will make it sustainable. Investment will come with breakout success. The big hits are just over the horizon."

Ronald C. Pruett Jr, Managing Partner, The Boston Associate



The African Creator Economy Report 2.0 is a remarkable piece of research and analysis, which I encourage everyone with an interest in the space to read. In particular, the report's Audience Anchor Ratio (AAR), a tool to compare how rooted creators are in their home audience vs. how popular they are globally, is fascinating.

Marie Lora-Mungai, Founder, Restless Global



CHAPTER 01

IS THERE A REAL DEMAND FOR AFRICAN CREATORS?

The African creator economy has already answered the first-order question “Is anyone watching?” with a resounding yes. Across the continent’s largest economies — South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya — YouTube and TikTok each command over 114 million verified, ad-reachable users, while Instagram adds another 41 million. Combined, that’s 272 million accounts reachable on just three platforms: an audience on par with the entire population of Western Europe’s three largest countries (Germany, France, and the UK). These aren’t soft sentiments about “potential”; they are hard, platform-reported reach numbers that make clear that African creators operate among audiences that rival those of mid-sized countries.

Metric	Egypt	Nigeria	Kenya	South Africa	Total
Number of internet users	96.3M	107.0M	27.4M	50.8M	281.5M
YouTube Platform-Reported Ad Reach	50.8M (52.7%)	27.1M (25.3%)	11.0M (40.2%)	25.3M (49.8%)	114.2M
Instagram Platform-Reported Ad Reach	20.0M (20.8%)	10.0M (9.3%)	3.5M (12.8%)	7.4M (14.6%)	40.9M
TikTok Platform-Reported Ad Reach	41.3M (42.9%)	37.5M (35.0%)	15.2M (55.3%)	23.4M (46.1%)	117.3M
Total (all)	112.1M	74.5M	29.7M	56.1M	272.4M

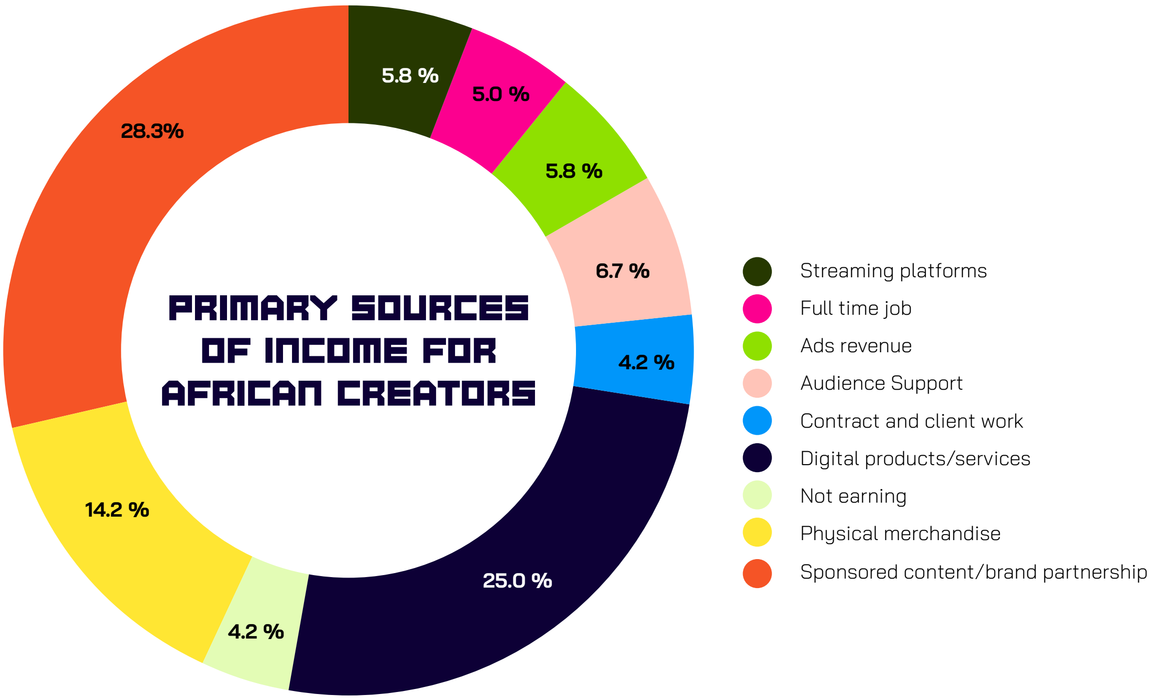
Data sourced from Country Reports by DataReportal: Digital 2025

The more complex question is “who pays, how much, and where does that money go?” Here, we knit together three perspectives: (1) platform population data from Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube across Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, and Egypt; (2) survey evidence from creators; and (3) interviews with creators operating in different niches and markets. Read as a single narrative, the data show a continent whose stories travel widely, whose audiences are real and growing, and whose value capture still lags behind the attention it commands.

Audience Willingness to Pay (Local and Global)

The African creator economy presents a fascinating paradox: a $3.08 billion market projected to reach $17.84 billion by 2030, yet creators struggle to monetise locally while global audiences eagerly consume their content. This expansion is largely driven by a growing population of young, tech-savvy individuals with a natural talent for storytelling, who are increasingly using digital platforms to build careers and reach audiences beyond their national borders. In terms of market value concentration, South Africa leads, followed closely by Nigeria, with Kenya and Egypt also contributing significantly. East Africa, comprising countries such as Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, is emerging as the fastest-growing region in this sector (The Guardian, 2025; CoherentMi).

Willingness to pay, however, is concentrated around formats that feel tangible: brand-led content, direct-to-consumer products/services, classes and workshops, live experiences, and tips/micro-patronage. Our survey mirrors this pattern.



28.3% and 25% of respondents reported brand partnerships or digital products/services as their primary sources of income, respectively. YouTube-first creators were more likely to cite ad revenue and affiliate partnerships; Instagram/TikTok-first creators leaned toward brand deals and D2C.

People clearly consume work created by creators, but they are selective about what they pay for. Utility, exclusivity, and proximity to a purchase (such as beauty, fashion, tech, or skills) convert better than general entertainment, unless the entertainment is explicitly packaged for export.

The Local Appreciation Gap

Within Africa, a profound disconnect exists between cultural appreciation and financial support. According to a report by Africa No Filter, a telling 78% of African youth report spending “nothing or very little” on arts and cultural experiences, even though 85% acknowledge their societal value. This means that while young Africans value arts and culture, their financial support for it is negligible to nonexistent, reflecting a gap between appreciation and the willingness or ability to pay.

That tension plays out in everyday choices. An analysis of The Star Newspaper's online subscribers in Kenya found that digital consumers are willing to pay up to 200 shillings (about $1.50) per month for content subscriptions. In Nigeria, moviegoers often choose a 2,500 naira Netflix subscription over spending the same amount on a single cinema ticket. Yet, even with this apparent value preference, Netflix has only 169,000 subscribers in a country of over 200 million people, illustrating how global pricing models often fail to meet the needs of African markets (234Digest, 2025).

This local spending reluctance is not just about affordability. Years of "free first" consumption, radio, terrestrial TV, and now social media, have trained audiences to pay primarily when two conditions are met: straightforward utility (learning, income-generating skills, health and finance advice) or true exclusivity (access, proximity, limited drops, and live moments).

The Global Pull

And yet, even as local monetisation pathways under-perform, the size and behaviour of African audiences are unmistakable in the platform data. If we look beyond creator headcounts to where audiences actually live, a striking picture emerges.

This effect is fully evidenced in Africa's cultural exports. Nollywood titles now dominate Netflix's global charts; Afrobeats streams exceed $100 million in annual worldwide revenue; and Amapiano, South Africa's house-infused sound, has broken into clubs and charts from London to Sydney. Beyond music and film, African fashion and digital creators are shaping international style and cultural trends. These successes underscore a broader truth: African creativity is being consumed globally, often at a greater scale abroad than at home.

To capture this effect in the creator economy, we developed the Audience Anchor Ratio, a metric that compares how rooted creators are in their home audience with how global their reach has become.

How to Read the Audience Anchor Ratio

We use the Audience Anchor Ratio (AAR) to answer a deceptively simple question: Where does a country's audience actually live, relative to the creators who are based there? Formally, for each platform and country, we count the number of creators—regardless of where they live—whose audience is at least 20% from a particular country, and divide it by the number of creators based in that country. The numerator indicates how strongly that country "pulls" creators because of its audience; the denominator indicates how large the local creator base is. The result is a directional signal about audience gravity versus local supply.

An AAR less than 1 means the local creator base is "exporting": In other words, local creators, especially the bigger ones, are reaching across borders (regional markets, diaspora, global niches) rather than relying primarily on domestic views. This is not a negative; in fact, it is often a hallmark of content's travelability. It suggests that the country's creators are competitive on global rails, that their content formats are legible outside national borders, and that the path to higher Average Revenue Per User markets (CPMs, brand budgets, subscriptions) is already open. For brands and investors, a sub-1 ratio highlights export engines: places where creator talent is primed for regional or global campaigns and licensing, even if domestic ad markets are thinner.

20%

Formally, for each platform and country, we count the number of creators—regardless of where they live—whose audience is at least 20% from a particular country, and divide it by the number of creators based in that country.

An AAR greater than 1 indicates that the audience in that country is large or attractive enough that more foreign creators serve it than local creators. Think of this as an audience-magnet market: language corridors, diaspora viewing, or regional cultural flows pull in non-resident creators. This does not necessarily mean locals aren't watching local creators; it means that, in addition to local creators, the audience consumes international content. It is often what we see in markets with a regional lingua franca (e.g., Arabic across MENA; Swahili in East Africa) or with strong diaspora demand. For policymakers and platforms, a high AAR indicates a country where the audience is at scale and already being monetised—sometimes by creators who live elsewhere.

For local creator ecosystems, it marks both an opportunity and a challenge: the demand is proven, but foreign supply is competing for it.

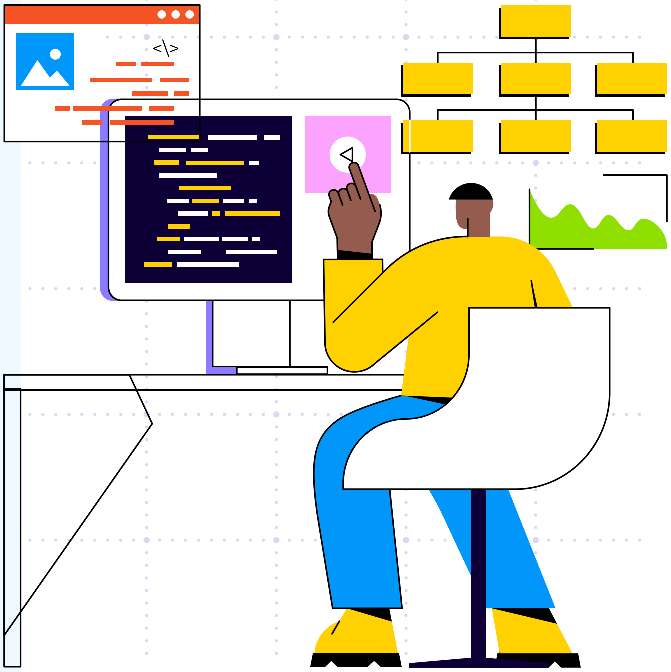
When the AAR sits around 1, supply and demand are roughly in balance: local creators collectively match the pull of the local audience. This equilibrium is particularly attractive for local reach and marketing because it implies a healthy bench of in-country creators who already speak to in-country viewers at scale, with enough global crossover to ensure fresh formats and competitive quality. For platforms and agencies planning nationwide campaigns, a balanced AAR is a green light: the market is big enough to matter, and the creator marketplace is locally equipped to deliver.

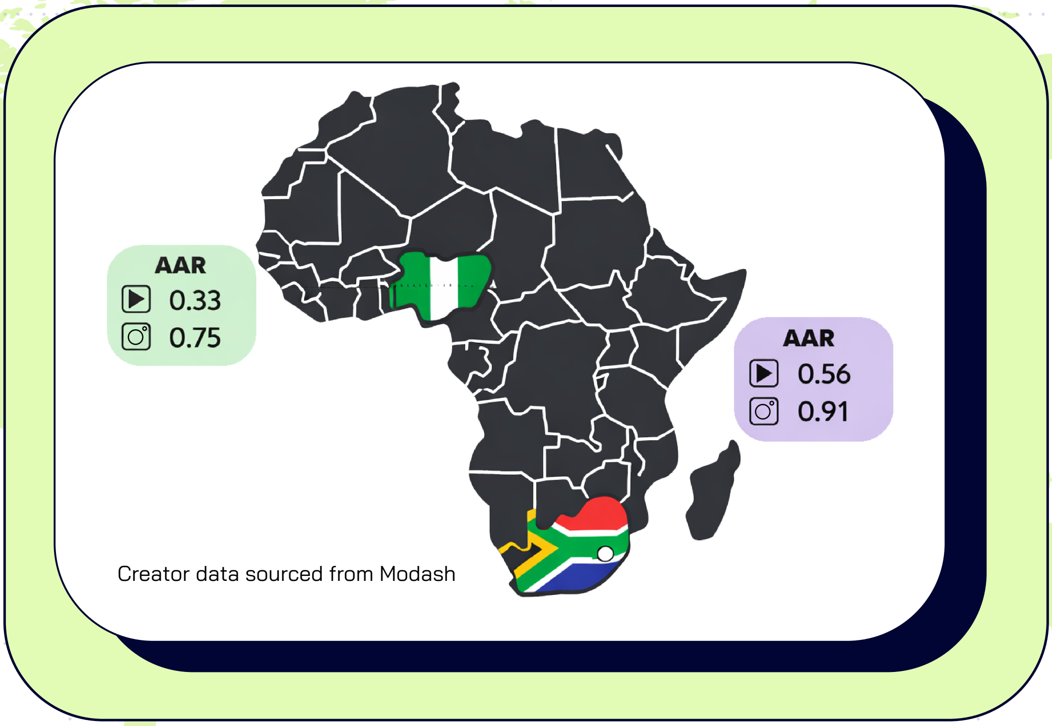
The ratio's magnitude adds nuance. If it is much greater than 1, it indicates that audiences in that country are consuming a lot of content produced elsewhere. That can be purely positive—evidence of cosmopolitan, multilingual consumption and the reach of diaspora creators—or it can expose a capability gap in the local ecosystem (insufficient supply of brand-ready creators, weaker production infrastructure, or payment frictions that slow local scaling). If it is well below 1, the story is usually that local creators have already broken out and grown beyond the home market, which is excellent for export revenue; the practical caveat is that local advertisers will need to select creators whose audience splits still include a strong domestic segment.

Used well, the Audience Anchor Ratio becomes a routing tool. Governments and platforms can spot where to invest in local capacity (training, payments, production) because the audience is already present. Brands can choose between local reach (balanced AAR) and regional amplification (sub-1 export engines or super-1 audience magnets). Creators can choose their packaging—language, subtitling, collaborations, product lines—based on whether a platform is better suited to local monetisation or to exporting content to higher-yield audiences. In short, AAR does not tell us who is "winning"; it tells us where demand lives per platform and how value can be captured, at home or across borders.

Across platforms, YouTube emerges as the primary export engine for Nigerian and South African creators. Nigeria has an Audience Anchor Ratio (AAR) of 0.33 on YouTube, while South Africa stands at 0.56, indicating that many successful channels scale by tapping into regional and diaspora audiences rather than relying solely on domestic viewership. Part of this pattern reflects YouTube's design with an algorithm that prioritises language, watch time, and topical relevance over geography, naturally boosting cross-border discovery. However, the same dynamic is seen on Instagram, albeit with comparatively higher AARs.

This signals that creators from the continent's two largest creative hubs are "global-first" by default, building audiences that extend well beyond national borders and positioning themselves to monetise in markets with greater purchasing power.

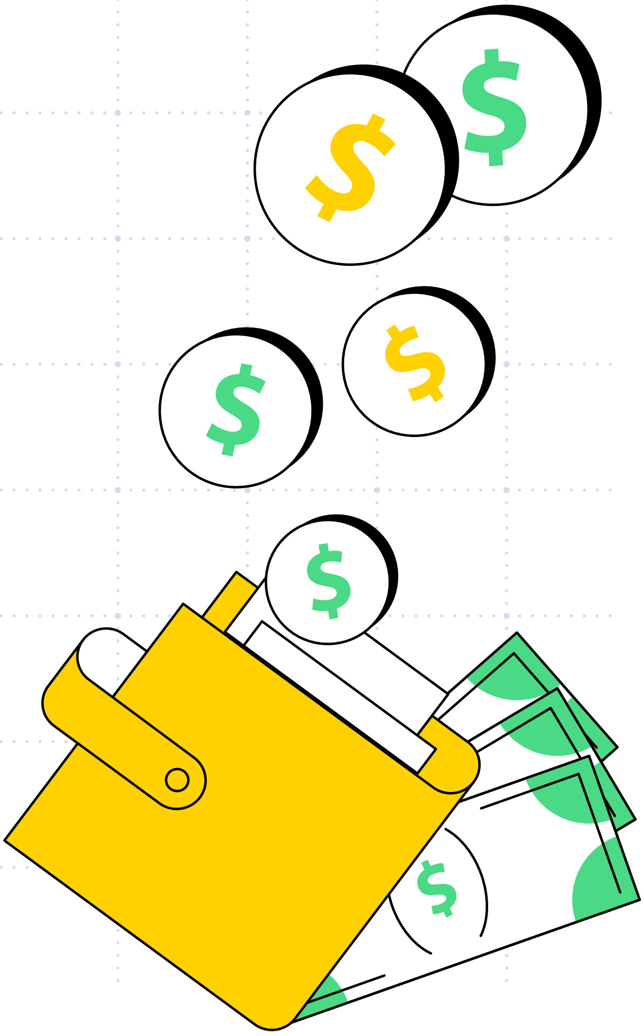




The Strategic Imperative

This gap between local spending power and global appeal requires sophistication from African creators. The data suggests a clear strategic direction: prioritise global markets for substantial revenue while developing innovative local monetisation that works within African economic realities.

In global markets, the path is increasingly clear: platforms such as Spotify, TikTok, and YouTube provide direct access to audiences willing to pay premium prices for authentic African content. The challenge is not demand; it is capturing and retaining the economic value generated by that demand.



Locally, success requires rethinking traditional monetisation models. Instead of broad entertainment content, creators should focus on "edutainment," practical, exclusive content that provides clear utility. Micro-payment structures, direct-to-consumer sales, and premium content offerings that align with local spending patterns show more promise than attempting to replicate global subscription models.

The **$17.84 billion 2030** projection becomes achievable not by forcing global models onto local markets, but by understanding and serving both audiences according to their distinct characteristics and capabilities.

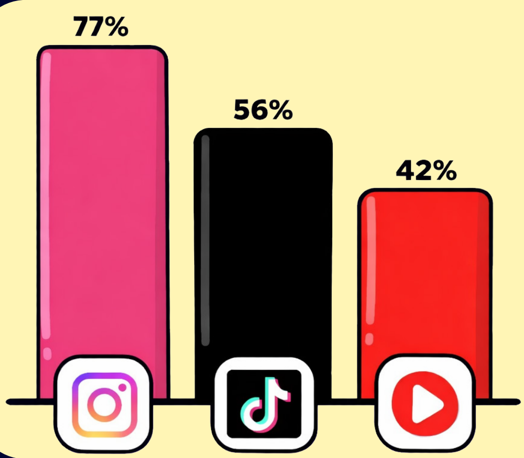
CHAPTER 02

THE MARKET MAP – PLATFORMS AND COUNTRIES

We have established that audiences exist for African creators at home and abroad; now we seek to turn those raw counts into a navigable market. In this chapter, we focus on four markets with the best platform-level coverage and commercial relevance—Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya and Egypt—and on the three platforms that dominate creator activity and advertiser attention. This selection reflects two practical constraints:

01 **Data availability:** the platform-level slices in our creator dataset are richest for these platforms and markets;

02 **Creator behaviour:** our survey and interviews repeatedly pointed to these three platforms as the primary arenas where creators build audiences and monetise.



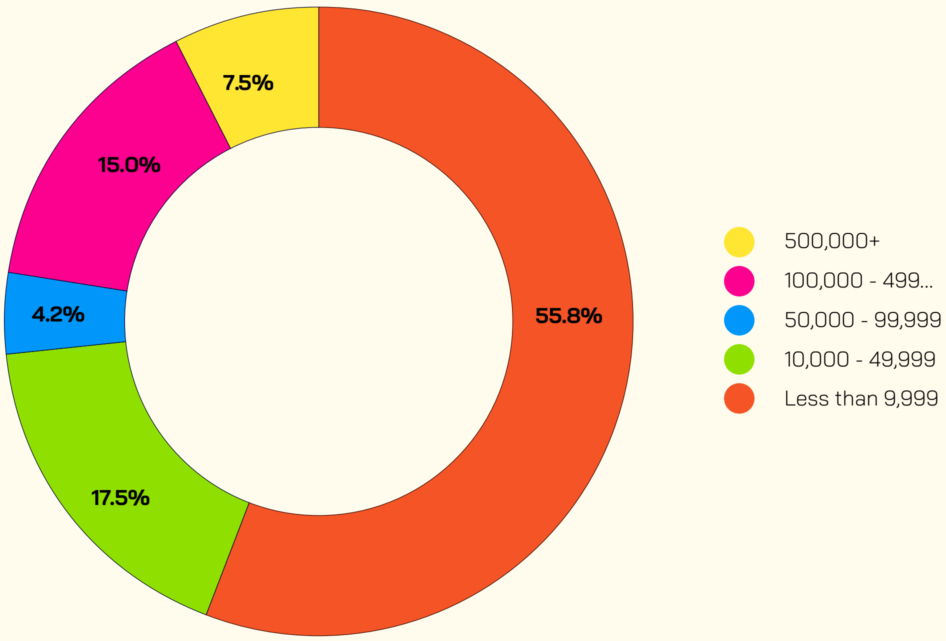
For our creator counts and demographics, we relied on platform-aggregated data from Modash, a global influencer marketing platform that indexes public creator profiles. Based on this data, we define a "creator" as anyone with greater than 1,000 followers/subscribers.

Our dataset and surveys frame those choices. For our creator counts and demographics, we relied on platform-aggregated data from Modash, a global influencer marketing platform that indexes public creator profiles. Based on this data, we define a "creator" as anyone with greater than 1,000 followers/subscribers.

Our survey sample is heavily weighted toward the two largest creative hubs: Nigeria and South Africa, with the remainder spread across Morocco, Kenya, Algeria and other markets. Platform usage in the sample underscores why we prioritised Instagram, TikTok and YouTube: 77% of respondents list Instagram as a primary platform, 56% list TikTok, and 42% list YouTube. Importantly, cross-platform behaviour is the norm: 76% of respondents list more than one primary platform.

Two further patterns from the survey are critical for the chapter's framing. First, the continent's creator base is dominated by micro-creators: 57% report fewer than 10,000 followers, and many still rely on Instagram as their primary commercial platform. This dynamic follows a classic positively skewed distribution. It is consistent across all platforms: most creators cluster in the lower follower ranges, and only a small fraction have large-scale audiences.

Second, creators with a larger audience (over 100,000 followers) behave differently. 89% of creators with over 100,000 followers are explicitly multi-platform. Among these creators, 96% use Instagram, 88% use TikTok, and 75%



use YouTube, showing that scale is built by combining fast discovery (TikTok), commercial activation (Instagram), and durable monetisation (YouTube).

For each platform-country pair, we examine four signal layers. We look at creator counts, gender and age mix, follower tiers, and audience-anchor signals, all through a single lens: what does this mean for monetisation? The result is a market map that not only shows where creators are, but also explains why they choose specific platforms, reflecting local category mixes, payout rails, and policy contexts, and how those choices shape the path from visibility to revenue across Africa's most active creator ecosystems.

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TikTok: The Mass-Audience Ramp

TikTok is a wide-open door through which audiences first discover creators at scale. It dwarfs other platforms by creator volume: **6.3 million in Nigeria, 3.1 million in Kenya, 2.7 million in South Africa, and 2.3 million in Egypt,** making it the continent's most expansive entry point for creative visibility.

Its short-form format, remix culture, and sound-led discovery compress the time from "**unknown**" to "**visible**," then hand off qualified attention to higher-intent platforms for commercialisation and compounding. The behaviour we observe in each market is, in turn, a function of who can be discovered quickly, which audiences the algorithm can reach cheaply, and where the money actually lands once views arrive.

However, a closer look at creator numbers and TikTok's Audience Anchor Ratio reveals a unique lens for the markets.

Nigeria's AAR sits at 0.98 against a vast base of creators. That near-parity profile is rare at this scale and tells a simple story: Nigerians primarily watch Nigerians on TikTok, though many homegrown creators also reach regional and diaspora audiences. The platform's algorithm-driven discovery system, which prioritises content virality over follower count, makes it easier for local creators to reach audiences regardless of their size or location. As a result, content tailored to Nigerian cultural, linguistic, and entertainment preferences spreads rapidly, reinforcing local creator-audience ties. TikTok's content style also maps well onto Nigeria's mobile-dominated internet usage and preference for bite-sized entertainment.

In practice, this balance keeps the discovery flywheel efficient. For brands, TikTok is a gold mine for local advertisers looking to reach customers in Nigeria. For creators, it validates a "**home court first**" playbook: win Nigeria with short,

Country	Creators (≥ 1k)	Creators with ≥ 20% audience in the country	Anchor Ratio (≥ 20% audience ÷ creators)
Nigeria	6,325,083	6,184,697	0.98
South Africa	3,137,668	4,465,372	1.42
Kenya	2,681,891	3,320,927	1.24
Egypt	2,342,918	4,686,813	2.0

TikTok dwarfs other platforms by creator volume: 6.3 million in Nigeria, 3.1 million in Kenya, 2.7 million in South Africa, and 2.3 million in Egypt, making it the continent's most expansive entry point for creative visibility.

sound-led formats, then monetise on Instagram (packaging and DMs) and deepen on YouTube (evergreen revenue). The strategic risk in a near-1 market is complacency, as the bench is deep and sameness can creep in. So, the winners are those who layer exportable hooks (language, subtitles, cross-cultural memes) onto local insight.

Kenya's AAR of 1.42 tells the opposite tale: Kenyan attention exceeds Kenyan supply, and the market is drawing in content from outside its borders. English helps, as does a category mix (food, beauty, travel, explainers) that is easy for non-Kenyan creators to penetrate Kenyan tastes. For Kenyan creators, it means headroom. The bar to break into the 10k–50k mid-tier is lower because the audience is already there and not fully served by domestic voices. For brands, it reframes casting: you can efficiently reach Kenya by booking a mix of local and regional talent, then using paid amplification to ensure in-country delivery. The policy implication is straightforward: every dollar spent on discovery tools, training, safety, and commerce rails that help Kenyan creators professionalise their work tilts the ratio back toward local supply and captures local spend. South Africa's AAR, at 1.24, is a milder version of Kenya's demand magnet. Over 3 million creator accounts globally have South Africa as a primary audience. The gap is wide enough to matter and small enough to be closed by better supply.

Egypt is the outlier. An AAR of 2.00, twice as much anchored attention as local creator supply, means Egyptians are watching a great deal of content made outside Egypt or by creators who target Egypt from elsewhere. Language is the most significant lever: Arabic content crosses borders into the wider MENA feed, where ad budgets and CPMs are higher, so Arabic-first formats in gaming, football, comedy/news, and edutainment flood Egyptian For You pages even when the handles are not Egypt-based. For Egyptian creators, the mid-tier (10k–100k) remains underbuilt, especially for brand-safe, Arabic-first female-led formats. For advertisers, this explains why multi-market casting—GCC, North Africa—often outperforms purely domestic rosters, and why usage rights and paid boosting matter: you are buying access to a dense audience served from multiple hubs.

While the AAR tells us where attention sits, following the money helps us understand why TikTok commands such outsized creator counts across African countries.

Over 3 million creator accounts globally have South Africa as a primary audience. The gap is wide enough to matter and small enough to be closed by better supply.

TIKTOK MONETISATION: AND WHY IT PULLS SO MANY AFRICAN CREATORS

TikTok's audience engine is the biggest in our four-country cut, and the monetisation menu, though unevenly available across Africa, goes a long way toward explaining why adoption is so broad compared with Instagram and YouTube. The platform's design rewards fast discovery and repeatable formats, and the earnings rails then nudge behaviour toward whatever pays now in each market.

TikTok's platform pay options fall into two categories. First, the Creator Rewards Program pays for original, long-form videos (over 60 seconds). However, eligibility is limited to accounts registered in a small set of countries: the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, South Korea, France, Mexico, and Brazil. This currently excludes Africa. African creators only receive these rewards if they relocate or register abroad, which is why many of the continent's top creators on the platform start over with new accounts when they move countries.

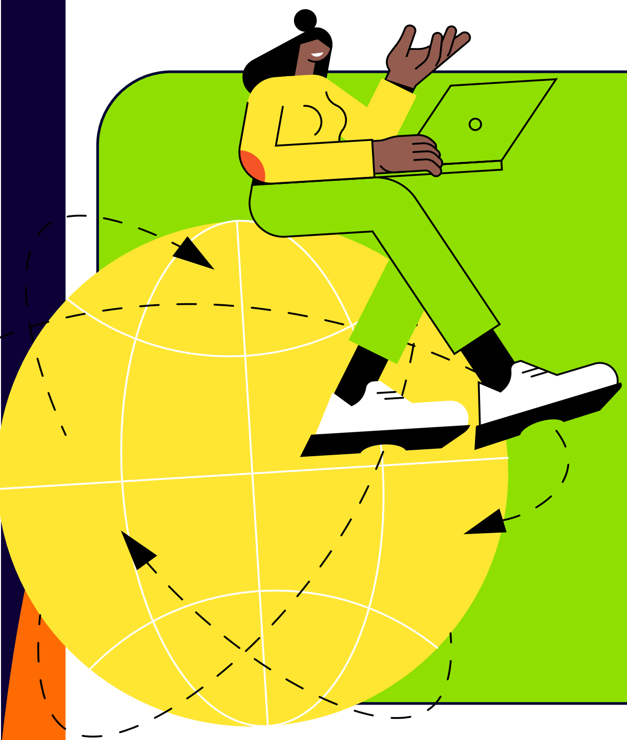
The second bucket is Effect Creator Rewards, which pays technical creators when their effects are used in enough public videos within a 90-day window, with caps of $14,000 per effect and $50,000 per month per creator. Reward thresholds and rates vary by effect category and publication channel. Crucially, TikTok has expanded the list of eligible regions to include 33 new ones, only 3 of which are in Africa (Egypt, South Africa, Morocco). That creates a specialised yet viable revenue stream for agencies and creators who can produce safe, brand-friendly content for mainstream categories (beauty, green-screen, utilities) that run across Arabic and Anglophone feeds.

TikTok has expanded the list of eligible regions to include 33 new ones, including Egypt, South Africa, Morocco.

Beyond platform pay, user pay is also becoming more robust. Subscriptions let creators set prices for exclusive content, and fans can unlock exclusive videos and perks. TikTok shares 50% of net subscription revenue with creators after app store fees, with programs in some regions increasing the on-platform share (and even offering performance bonuses) to make this income more predictable. With at least 10k followers and a minimum of 1M video views in the past calendar month, creators will also be eligible for a 20% bonus on their monthly payouts, bringing the maximum profit-sharing to 70%. These mechanics push creators to professionalise cadence and packaging, and they reward niches that can cultivate paying superfans—from beauty and fitness to recipes, gaming, and finance explainers.

TikTok shares 50% of net subscription revenue with creators after app store fees, with additional on-platform incentives in select regions that can raise creator earnings to as much as 70% through performance-based bonuses.

LIVE & Gifts provide variable, event-driven income. Take-rates can be high (industry reports peg TikTok's share of gift value at around 50% after conversions and fees), so most African creators deploy LIVE not as a core business but as community maintenance. Q&A sessions, product reveals, and music sessions, often with a clear call to action to WhatsApp groups, paid classes, or brand-sponsored segments. LIVE & Gifts lower the threshold for creators to begin earning, and with these features, even small creators can monetise through fan support, bypassing the more rigid ad-revenue structures seen on YouTube. Users can buy TikTok coins for gifting starting at ₦480 ($0.32) and up to ₦414,900 ($276). For Apple device users, payment is as easy as face scanning with App Store credentials. Receiving money from viewers during a livestream provides immediate validation and feedback, creating a feedback loop that incentivises more frequent content creation. This real-time recognition often feels more personal and motivating than passive ad revenue. Thus, this model is particularly attractive in Nigeria, where many young people seek creative income streams that require minimal capital.

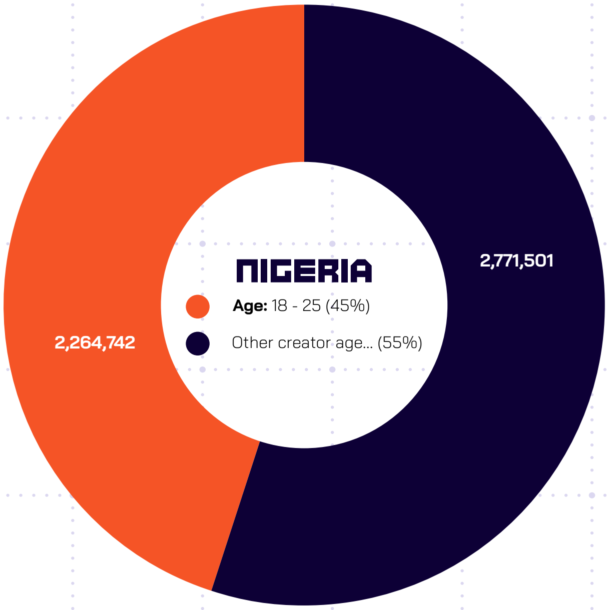


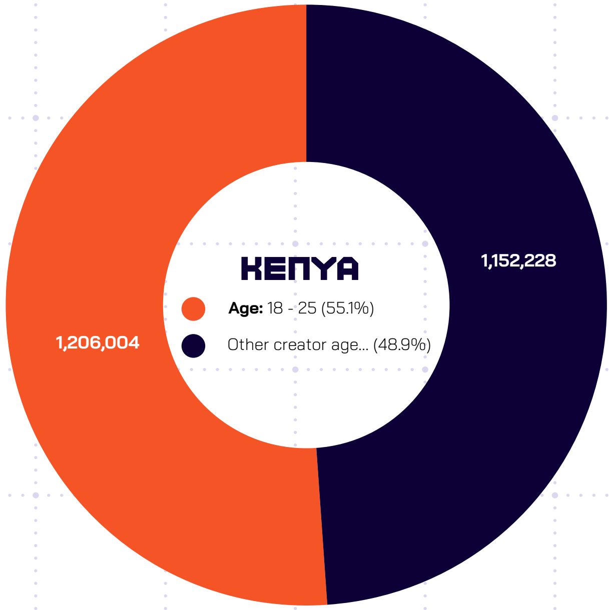
For most African creators, TikTok LIVE & Gifts function less as a core revenue engine and more as a community-maintenance tool, combining real-time interaction, fan support, and clear calls to action that route audiences into WhatsApp groups, paid classes, and brand collaborations.

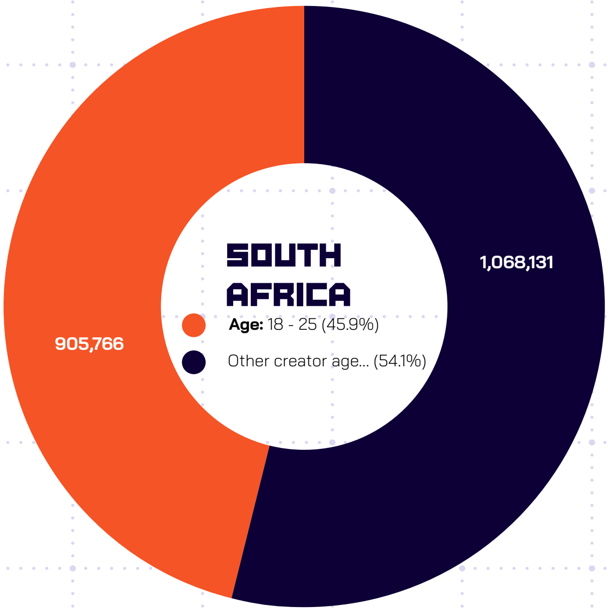
Finally, TikTok Shop (and its affiliate layer) is expanding globally. While availability in Africa remains patchy and fast-moving, the direction is clear: where Shop turns on, the platform becomes a one-screen path from short video to purchase, and social commerce volumes jump. Reports from 2024–2025 show rapid merchant sign-ups and growing social commerce totals in Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa. As Shop pilots and cross-border programs roll out, creators in those markets can increasingly build content formats that include product links or in-flow coupon codes.

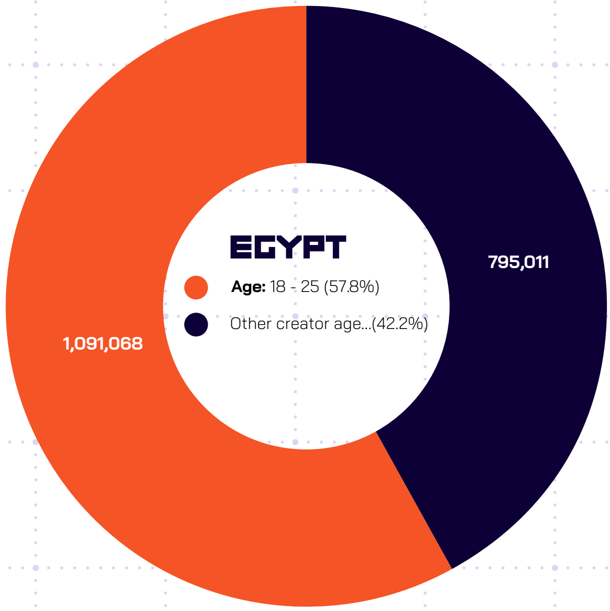
Creator Demographics

TikTok's youth engine is unmistakable. The 18–25 cohort is the largest age band in every market, accounting for over 45% of the creator base in each country.









Beneath the shared youth profile of TikTok creators across markets lies a clear divergence in gender dynamics. South Africa and Kenya lean notably female, while Egypt stands as a sharp outlier with a heavily male-skewed ecosystem.

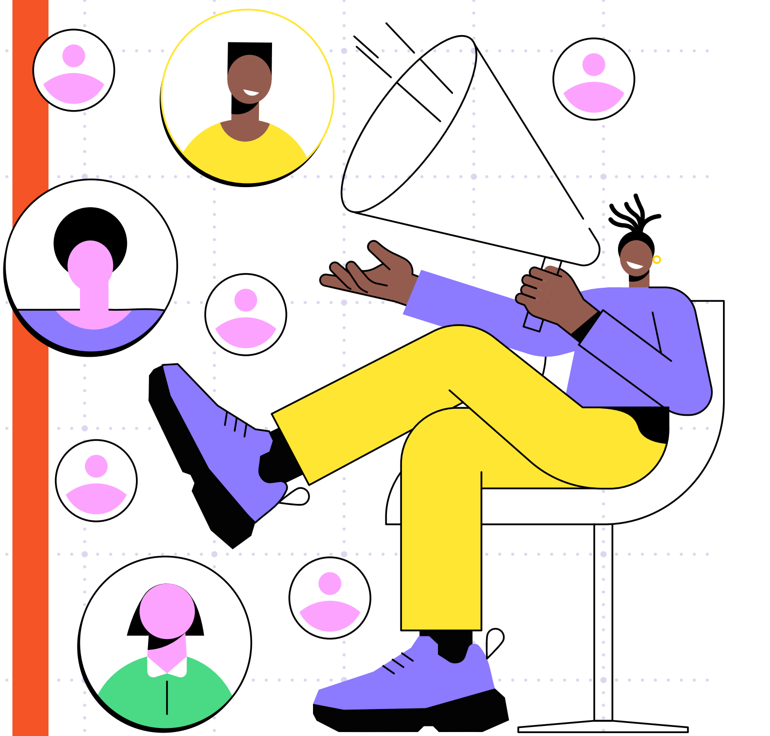
In South Africa, women account for 52% of creators, men 31%, and gender-neutral or business accounts 17%. Kenya shows a similar pattern, with 48% female, 44% male, and 8% gender-neutral creators, suggesting that both markets have relatively open participation across genders, especially in consumer and lifestyle niches.

Nigeria shows a more balanced split: female creators account for 43%, male creators 45%, and gender-neutral accounts 12%. This blend highlights how the country's large influencer economy accommodates both personal brands and emerging micro-businesses using TikTok as a sales channel.

By contrast, Egypt is heavily male: 69% of creators are men, 21% are women, and 10% are gender-neutral or brand accounts — the only market where male dominance persists across all tiers. The imbalance likely reflects a mix of cultural norms, gendered digital participation gaps, and the prominence of brand or institutional accounts over female-led creator voices.

Follower tiers on TikTok align with typical patterns. They are bottom-heavy across the board, as expected for a discovery network: the vast majority fall in the 1k–10k range, with long, thin tails above 100k.

Creator participation across South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria reflects relatively open gender access, with balanced representation across women, men, and gender-neutral or business accounts, particularly in consumer and lifestyle categories.



Creator participation across South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria reflects relatively open gender access, with balanced representation across women, men, and gender-neutral or business accounts, particularly in consumer and lifestyle categories.

TikTok

	Nigeria	Kenya	South Africa	Egypt
Follower count (1000 to 10,000)	6,107,524	3,038,146	2,553,940	2,135,504
Follower count (10,000 to 50,000)	159,094	72,768	104,528	162,346
Follower count (50,000 to 100,000)	15,439	7,762	11,761	21,385
Follower count (100,000 to 500,000)	12,812	6,821	8,969	18,274
Follower count (500,000 and above)	2,173	925	1,212	4,101

TikTok is an audience engine first, a payments engine second. For the median African creator, sustainable income still comes from brand deals, UGC retainers, affiliate commerce, off-platform products, and, for the technically inclined in eligible markets, effects payouts. The creators who thrive treat TikTok views as collateral proof that a narrative resonates, and quickly translate that proof into off-platform assets (email lists, WhatsApp communities), Instagram-native commerce (catalogues, DM sales), or YouTube series that harvest higher-yield watch time.

Instagram: The Commercial Middle

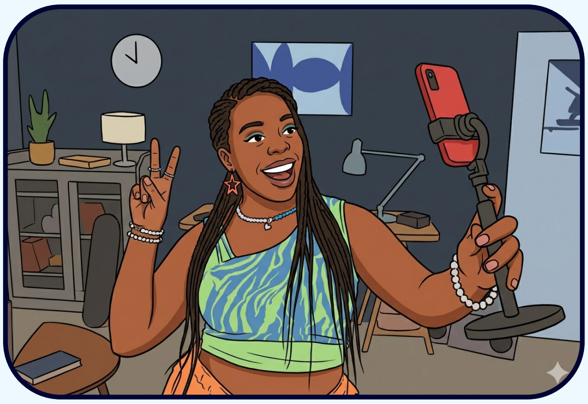
Instagram's creator pools are smaller than TikTok's in every assessed market. Nigeria, with 469,243 creators and South Africa, with 353,413, represent the deepest creator pools on the platform. Kenya's 89,001 creators form a smaller but commercially vibrant community, while Egypt's 24,810 have the smallest pool. However, a clearer picture emerges when we introduce the platform's Audience Anchor Ratio.

Country	Creators (≥ 1k)	Creators with ≥ 20% audience in the country	Anchor Ratio (≥ 20% audience ÷ creators)
Nigeria	469,243	351,785	0.75
South Africa	353,413	320,125	0.91
Kenya	89,001	220,037	2.47
Egypt	24,810	436,605	17.6

NIGERIA - BIG SUPPLY, EXPORT-LEANING DEMAND

Nigeria has the largest Instagram creator base on the continent, with women accounting for about 42% of creators, men 35%, and the remaining 24% made up of neutral accounts such as brands and businesses. The strong representation of female-led accounts aligns with the dominance of fashion, beauty, wellness, and lifestyle content on the platform — categories where women often lead both as creators and consumers. In contrast, male creators tend to be more visible in tech, fitness, humour, and motivational content. The presence of gender-neutral accounts reflects the growing influence of non-personality-based content, such as memes, aggregated content, and thematic media pages, which often drive high engagement but follow different monetisation trajectories.

In terms of age, Instagram's Nigerian creator base skews heavily toward young adults. Creators aged 25–35 make up the clear majority (58.2%), followed by 35–45 (10.1%) and 18–25 (4.1%). This



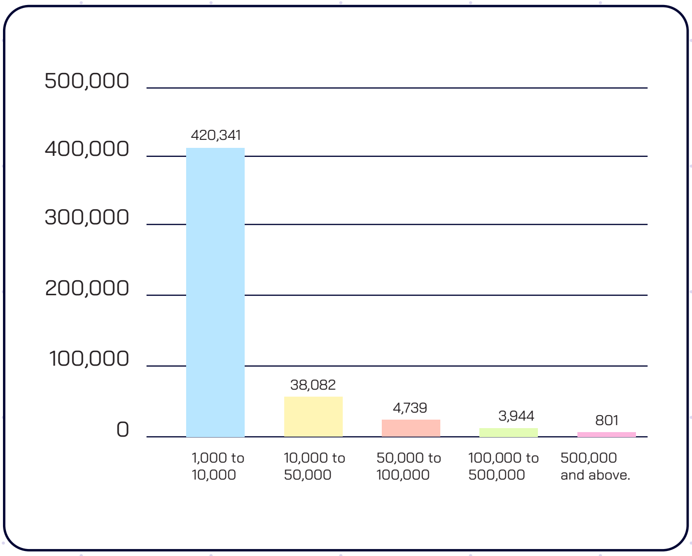
The country's Instagram Audience Anchor Ratio stands at 0.75, showing that many creators attract significant audiences outside their home market, especially in the diaspora and across Africa, where purchasing power, brand budgets, and payout rails are stronger. In practical terms, many Nigerian creators are sufficiently anchored in their home market to feel authentic, yet global enough to set pricing and sell across borders.

age distribution reinforces Instagram's position as a platform that blends aesthetic curation with cultural fluency, especially among millennials and older Gen Zs. The lower representation in the 18–25 bracket compared with TikTok suggests that younger creators may be migrating to platforms with lower entry barriers and more virality-driven discovery systems.

Nigeria's near-even split between female and male creators, alongside a growing share of gender-neutral accounts, shows how TikTok supports both personal influence and micro-businesses using the platform as a sales channel.

The follower-tier map reveals the structure underneath this opportunity. An overwhelming 420,000 Nigerian Instagram creators fall into the 1,000–10,000 follower range, while only about 4,700 sit between 50,000–100,000 followers and fewer than 1,000 cross the half-million mark. This sharp taper highlights a long "tail" of micro- and mid-tier creators who are active and engaged, often closer to audiences than celebrity influencers, making them attractive for brand collaborations.

The vast majority of Nigerian Instagram creators sit in the 1,000–10,000 follower bracket (around 420,000 accounts), while only about 4,700 reach 50,000–100,000 followers and fewer than 1,000 exceed 500,000.



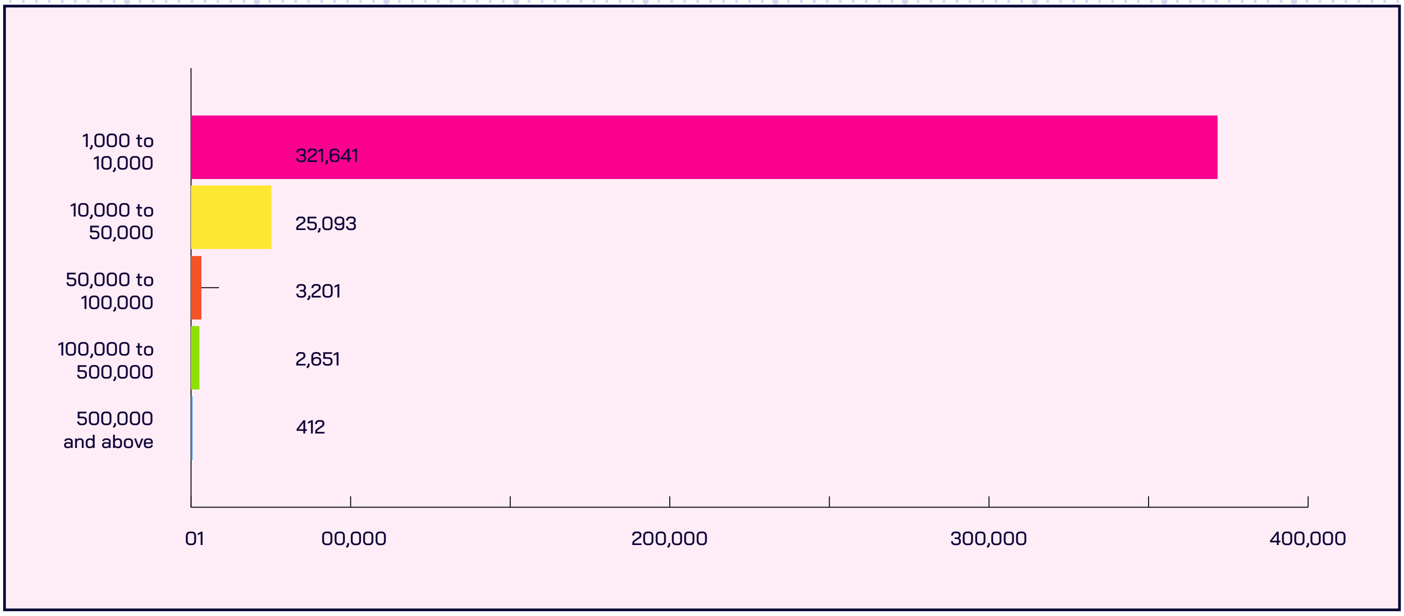
The survey reinforces this picture: Instagram-first Nigerian creators highlight brand deals and digital products as their top revenue streams, while citing marketing and promotion, contracts/legal, and access to markets as their most significant constraints. These gaps point directly to the infrastructure needed to convert reach into repeatable commercial income. Together, the data depict an ecosystem built on breadth rather than a few stars, with thousands of export-ready creators across niches positioned to drive Nigeria's next wave of commercial opportunity.

SOUTH AFRICA - BRAND READY BALANCE AND REPEATABLE BUYS

South Africa's Instagram creator base totals about 353,000 accounts, with women representing 46%, men 33%, and neutral accounts 21%. The 25–35 age group forms the backbone of South Africa's Instagram creator ecosystem, accounting for nearly 57% of all creators. This concentration places them squarely in the demographic most attractive to lifestyle, fashion, beauty, and wellness brands, making them highly commercialisable. Younger creators aged 18–25 represent about 8% of the base, and the 35–45 cohort makes up roughly 9%, often producing niche or authoritative content that appeals to engaged, higher-value audiences. Creators aged 45 and above are the smallest group at just under 2%.

> "South Africa's Instagram creator economy is anchored by 25–35-year-olds, who make up nearly 57% of all creators, placing the platform squarely in the demographic most attractive to lifestyle, fashion, beauty, and wellness brands."

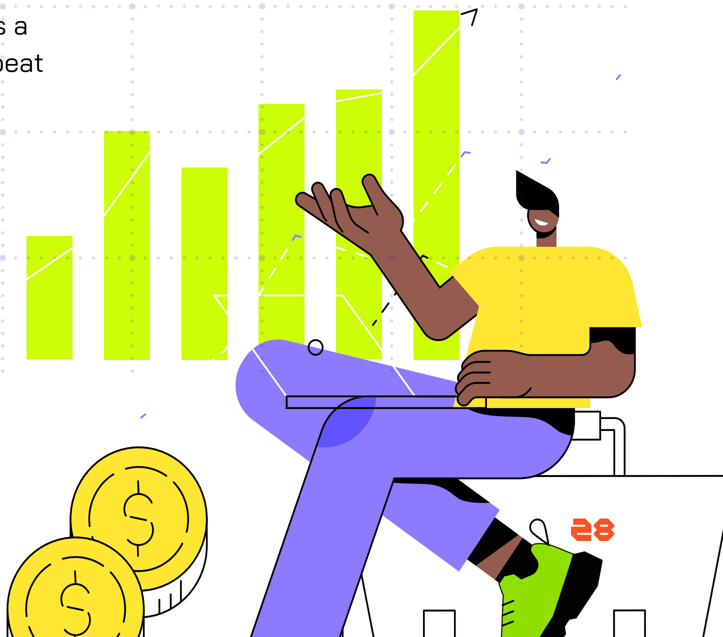
For South African Instagram creators, an anchor ratio near parity (~0.91) indicates their audiences are largely local, providing a strong, reliable domestic foundation. This balance allows creators to focus on monetisation strategies that work in the country, such as brand deals, retainers, and direct-to-consumer offerings, without relying heavily on international or diaspora audiences. Essentially, the market's predictability enables creators to package their services professionally, price confidently, and scale repeatable revenue within a well-established ecosystem.



Instagram follower counts in South Africa follow a typical distribution: the vast majority of creators fall in the 1,000–10,000 range, and fewer than 4,000 reach 100,000–500,000 followers. Only about 400 creators have more than 500,000 followers.

South Africa's retail and agency ecosystems are relatively mature, with beauty, fashion, and wellness already well developed, making Instagram the default storefront. Survey responses reinforce this maturity with South African creators reporting more retainers, better contracts, and clearer rates than their TikTok-first peers. The result is a market where parity anchors predictability: creators focus on professional packaging (rate cards, bundled offerings like Reel + Story + links) and proof points (tracked sales), while brands treat Instagram as a high-confidence, high-repeat buy.

Only 400 South African creators exceed 500,000 followers—yet Instagram remains the market's most predictable, professional, and repeat-buy platform.



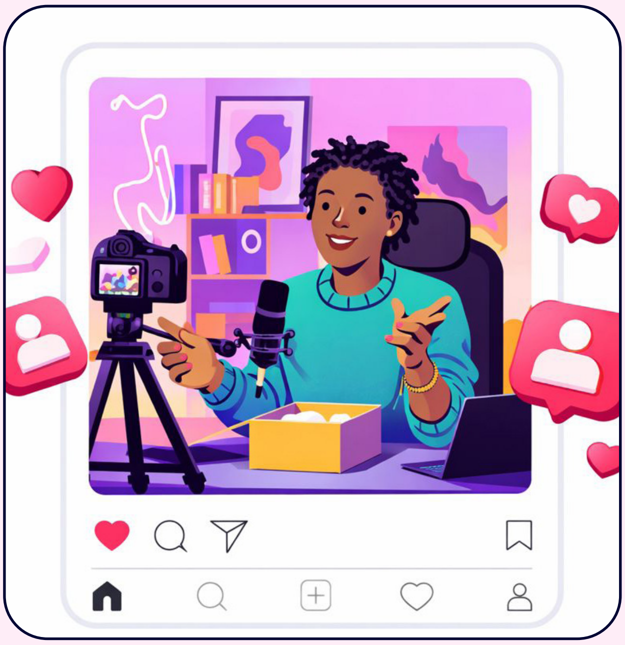
KENYA - A DEMAND MAGNET WITH HEADROOM FOR LOCAL CREATORS

Kenya's supply-side numbers are small **(89,001 creators)** compared to Nigeria and South Africa, but its anchored audience is enormous **(220,037)**, pushing its ratio to **2.47.** That gap signals **untapped local demand** relative to local supply. Kenyan audiences are consuming content at scale, but many of the creators they engage with are based outside their domestic ecosystem. In practical terms, this means local monetisation potential is limited, not because the audience is not present, but because it is essentially "**importing**" content from abroad. For Kenyan creators, the high AAR poses a challenge: building domestic audiences, which is critical to capturing local brand spend.

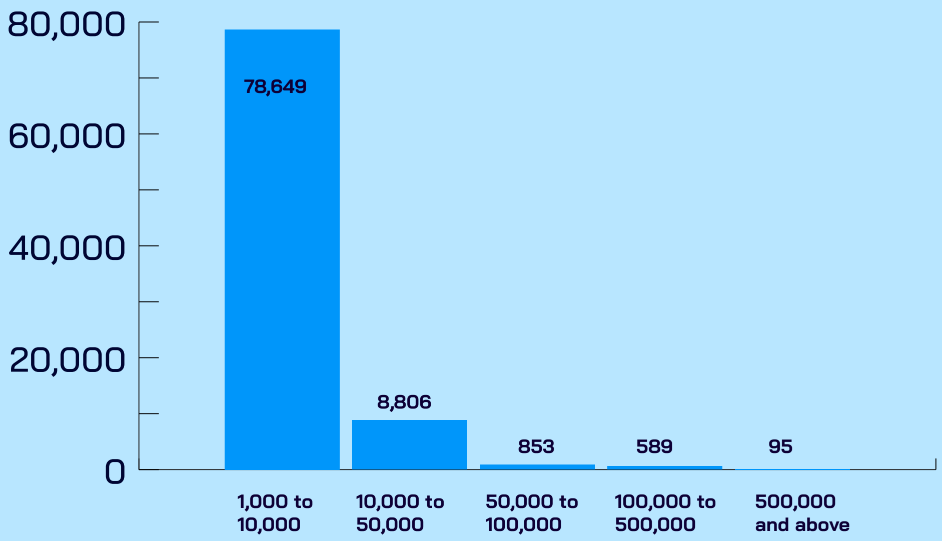
Kenya's creator economy isn't short on audience—it's short on local supply: just 89,001 creators serving 220,037 active consumers, forcing the market to import influence instead of monetising it at home.

Demographically, Kenya's creator gender split on Instagram leans slightly male, with men representing 45% of creators, women 33%, and another 22% gender-neutral or brand pages. This mix hints at category DNA: plenty of sport, comedy, tech, and hustle culture, alongside beauty, fashion, and lifestyle, which tend to break first on TikTok before graduating to Instagram. By age, creators are heavily concentrated in the 25–35 bracket (61%), with 18–25 at 4% and 35+ at roughly 11%.

Kenyan creators in our survey cite the convenience of mobile money and micro-commerce as their edge. Because M-Pesa makes it trivial to sell small-ticket products, classes, and services, Kenya's best short-to-Instagram plays are D2C first, brand second, which is the inverse of markets where brand spend dominates from day one. Programs that equip creators with pricing and packaging guidance, bilingual content (Swahili/English), and basic operational tools such as invoices, contracts, and media kits can deliver rapid returns. Marketing support, mentorship, and equipment are also top creator needs. The strategic opportunity lies in growing the mid-tier (10,000–100,000 followers) and increasing female representation in consumer-focused categories, ensuring that every new creator who packages and prices professionally is positioned to capture both D2C and brand revenue in a market where the audience and payment rails are already primed.



Kenya's creator economy is mobile-money native and D2C-first: a young, male-leaning base selling directly through M-Pesa, with the real upside unlocked by growing the mid-tier and bringing more women into high-value consumer categ



EGYPT - SMALL BENCH, BIG STAGE

Egypt's Instagram creator pool is relatively small, with just 24,810 accounts, and heavily skewed toward the 25–35 age group, which makes up 64% of creators. This reflects how Instagram in Egypt is used as a professional and commercial space, aligned with the stage of life when many are building careers or businesses.

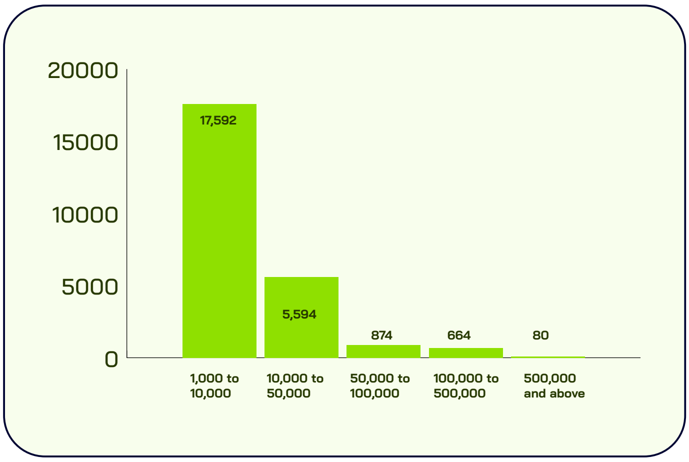
The follower pyramid also follows the positively skewed distribution. 70.9% of creators fall between 1,000 and 10,000; 22.5% are between 10,000 and 50,000; and only a little over 6% of local creators have an audience above 50,000.

Egypt stands apart as the most male-dominated creator market studied, where brand and business accounts now rival individual female creators, signalling a platform shaped by institutions rather than personalities.

Egypt's Instagram ecosystem is compact and steeply tiered: just 24,810 creators, with over 70% clustered between 1,000–10,000 followers and fewer than 7% surpassing 50,000.

Strikingly, men account for 69% of Egypt's creator pool. It is the only of the four markets assessed where gender-neutral and business accounts (16%) slightly outnumber female creators (15%), highlighting the platform's stronger emphasis on institutional and brand presence than on individual female-led creator activity.

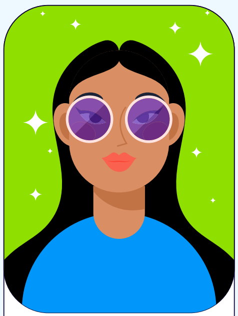
Legal and social headwinds amplify Egypt's male tilt on Instagram. There have been high-profile prosecutions of women under "public morals" provisions, and the harassment and reputational risk that trails them push many female creators away



from highly personal, lifestyle-forward content into safer territory. This, combined with a category mix already skewed male (football, gaming, tech, comedy/news), affects female creator numbers. The rational workaround is shopfronts and brand- or gender-neutral pages, which allow creators to sell without centring beauty and lifestyle content.

This backdrop makes Egypt's audience anchor ratio especially revealing. With roughly 436,605 accounts worldwide holding at least 20% of their followers in Egypt, the ratio is extraordinarily high at 17.6. This signals dense domestic demand relative to a thin local supply. In practice, Egyptians are present and engaged on Instagram, yet too few Egypt-based creators occupy the feed, so attention flows to regional and global voices. Additionally, Instagram's unique approach to platform-based compensation, or the lack thereof, contributes to the dearth of Egyptian creators on the platform.

Egypt's Instagram market shows intense domestic demand but limited local supply: a high audience anchor ratio of 17.6 reflects a feed dominated by regional and global voices, shaped by male-skewed categories, brand-led workarounds, and limited platform-based creator incentives.



Female creators

Nigeria: 41.79%
Kenya: 33.12%
South Africa: 45.87%
Egypt: 14.95%

Gender neutral accounts

Nigeria: 23.70%
Kenya: 21.43%
South Africa: 21.31%
Egypt: 15.76%

YouTube: The Income Compounding Engine

YouTube converts spikes of attention into durable assets: episodes that keep earning, search results that keep ranking, and libraries that brands can sponsor long after the initial burst. In our four focal markets, YouTube operates as a cash-flow machine because it rewards repeatable IP, metadata discipline, and consistency.

Across the four markets we studied, Egypt has the largest YouTube creator base by far.

YouTube turns attention spikes into compounding assets—episodes that keep earning, libraries that keep ranking, and IP that brands can sponsor long after the first view.

With 82,687 creators and over 1,000 subscribers each, its YouTube creator count is five times Nigeria's at 15,105. Nigeria actually has the lowest creator count among the four countries, trailing behind South Africa (16,065) and Kenya (18,429).

Egypt's YouTube creator economy dwarfs its peers: over 82,000 creators—five times Nigeria's base—making it the dominant production hub across the four markets.

At a glance, the Audience Anchor Ratio (AAR) makes the demand story legible. Nigeria (0.33) and South Africa (0.56) sit below parity. A large share of Nigerian and South African channels with ⩾1k subs accumulate meaningful viewing outside their borders—diaspora, pan-African niches, global English. That exportability matters financially: USD/FX CPMs and international brand budgets are more reliable when the audience mix is global.

Country	Creators (⩾ 1k)	Creators with ⩾ 20% audience in the country	Anchor Ratio (⩾ 20% audience ÷ creators)
Nigeria	15,105	4,930	0.33
South Africa	16,065	8,972	0.56
Kenya	18,429	19,323	1.05
Egypt	82,687	87,561	1.06

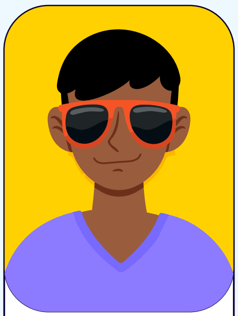
Nigeria and South Africa monetize beyond their borders; their sub-parity Audience Anchor Ratios signal globally exportable audiences that attract stronger CPMs and international brand budgets.

Kenya (1.05) and Egypt (1.06) sit just above parity. Domestic attention is fully served and slightly supplemented by cross-border channels (English for Kenya; Arabic for Egypt and the wider MENA funnel). For creators, that means headroom at home (the audience is there and reachable via strong SEO, titling, and chapters) and language spillover. For brands, it legitimises blended casting by leveraging local anchors and regional creators, as anchored audiences in Kenya and Egypt are already accustomed to watching a mix of domestic and non-domestic channels.

Creator Demographics

YouTube's gender profile adds another layer of understanding. Across the four countries, gender-neutral or brand/institutional channels constitute a large, consequential share of the ecosystem, often outnumbering female-labelled channels and, in Egypt, running close to male-labelled channels (34,896).

	Nigeria	Kenya	South Africa	Egypt
Male Creators	5,503	8,211	5,691	34,896
Gender neutral creators	6,245	6,220	7,555	32,725
Female creators	3,341	3,998	3,359	15,066



Male creators

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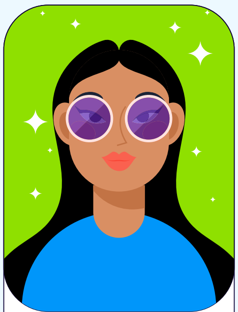


Female creators

Nigeria: 3,341
Kenya: 3,998
South Africa: 3,359
Egypt: 15,066

This matters because these "neutral" channels: retailers, banks, telcos, media houses, sports clubs, labels, creator-led companies, upload with newsroom regularity, invest in thumbnails, chapters and playlists, and commission creators for series that live on both the creator's channel and the brand's own property. That dual-channel strategy lengthens campaign life and keeps converting long after media runs end.

Across markets, the 25–35 cohort is the engine of long-form content, as YouTube's creator base is slightly older than those on TikTok or Instagram. That skew makes intuitive sense. This is the life stage when creators settle into repeatable formats—tech reviews, finance primers, career skills, cooking, parenting—invest in better audio/lighting, and prioritise metadata.

Neutral channels turn campaigns into durable content libraries—publishing with newsroom discipline, investing in structure, and converting attention long after paid media runs end.

YouTube's long-form economy is powered by 25–35 year-olds who settle into repeatable formats, upgrade production quality, and prioritize metadata as a growth lever.

YouTube Creator Age Distribution

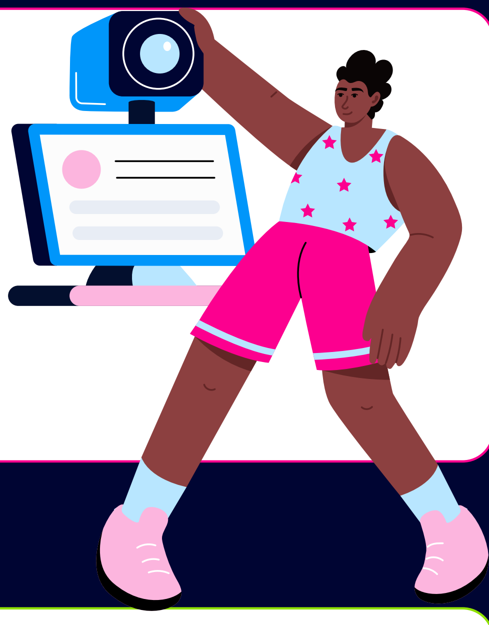
	Nigeria	Kenya	South Africa	Egypt
Age (18 to 25)	34.19%	36.92%	42.21%	38.14%
Age (25 to 35)	54.51%	53.45%	43.74%	43.90%
Age (35 to 45)	9.41%	8.25%	9.70%	13.26%
Age (45 and above)	1.89%	1.38%	4.34%	4.70%

The 18–25 tier is not far behind. South Africa is the youngest by share, with 42.2% of age-labelled creators in this band. Younger creators bring the "series energy" YouTube rewards: challenges, campus life, football commentary, gaming franchises—and they translate TikTok discovery into YouTube subscribers more aggressively. As data costs and mobile phone penetration improve, this cohort becomes the fastest feeder into the 10k–50k subscriber mid-tier, where brand integrations begin to make economic sense.

An additional interesting finding regarding YouTube subscriber counts is that the ladder thickens at the top. While subscriber counts still follow a typical positively skewed distribution, with creators clustering at the lower end of the spectrum, YouTube has a markedly heavier upper tail than TikTok or Instagram. In practice, a larger share of channels fall into the ⩾100k tier on YouTube.

	Nigeria		
	YouTube	Instagram	TikTok
Follower count (100,000-500,000)	7.04%	0.84%	0.20%
Follower count (500,000-and above)	1.72%	0.17%	0.03%

	Kenya		
	YouTube	Instagram	TikTok
Follower count (100,000-500,000)	4.70%	0.66%	0.22%
Follower count (500,000-and above)	0.61%	0.11%	0.03%



	South Africa		
	YouTube	Instagram	TikTok
Follower count (100,000-500,000)	4.12%	0.75%	0.33%
Follower count (500,000-and above)	0.76%	0.12%	0.05%

	Egypt		
	YouTube	Instagram	TikTok
Follower count (100,000-500,000)	6.21%	2.66%	0.78%
Follower count (500,000-and above)	2.00%	0.32%	0.18%

Unlike short-form platforms, YouTube's creator landscape shows a higher concentration of followers in the upper tiers. Egypt alone counts 1,648 creators with over 500,000 subscribers, compared to 260 in Nigeria, 126 in South Africa, and 113 in Kenya. YouTube attracts more creators to the upper subscriber tiers (⩾100k) than TikTok or Instagram because its discovery and payout mechanics reward sustained growth rather than spikes. Search and suggested traffic keep successful videos discoverable for months or years, so once a channel breaks through, each new upload sits on top of an expanding back catalogue that continues to earn views and AdSense.

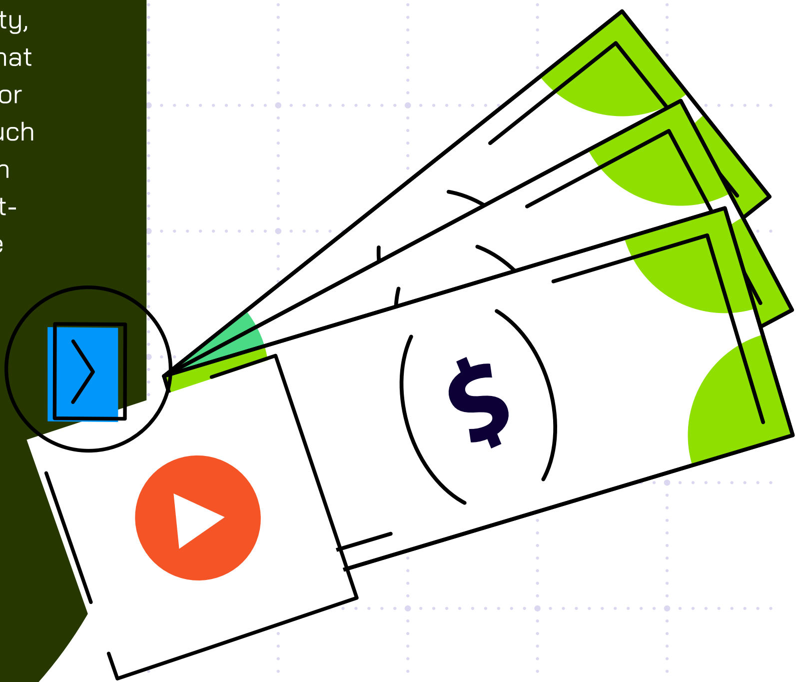
INSTAGRAM AND YOUTUBE MONETISATION OPTIONS: AND THEIR EFFECT ON EGYPTIAN CREATORS

Instagram can pay creators but just not as clearly, consistently, or widely in Egypt as rival platforms. Most creators worldwide still earn on IG through the "off-platform" playbook: Brand Deals and User-Generated Content, plus Affiliates, and, where available, Subscriptions.

For countries like Nigeria and Kenya, where data availability and accessibility are key considerations for creators when choosing media, connectivity is not the binding constraint; platform economics are. Egypt's connectivity picture is improving (median mobile download ≈speeds 24 Mbps; fixed ≈76 Mbps), and social penetration is high (50.7M social user identities). Mobile data is also cheap by global standards (roughly $0.65/GB on average, versus about $1.81/GB in South Africa. That combination changes the creative calculus. If it's affordable for your fans to watch, you can go longer, higher-quality, and more frequent—precisely the kind of content that flourishes on YouTube. This means the bottleneck for Egyptian creators isn't "can people stream?" so much as "where do creators get discovered and paid?" On those dimensions, YouTube and TikTok currently out-muscle Instagram in Egypt, which helps explain the relatively smaller pool of IG creators in our count.

Instagram can pay creators in Egypt—but not clearly, consistently, or at scale—leaving discovery and income far more predictable on YouTube and TikTok

The YouTube Partner Program (and Premium) has been well established in Egypt for years, with consistent AdSense payouts and a MENA ad market that invests heavily in Arabic video. Taxation rules for foreign digital services are now more straightforward, adding compliance friction but not erasing certainty. Put simply: Egypt offers audience × rails × payouts. Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa also have access to the expanded YouTube Partner Program (YPP), as well as four other African countries (Algeria, Morocco, Senegal, and Uganda). However, limitations and optionalities plague benefits. Nigeria's audience is massive, but long-form YouTube economics rub against higher upload frictions, inconsistent broadband quality, and the availability of faster feedback loops on TikTok/IG. South Africa's YouTube is high-quality but smaller in headcount, as many SA creators and audiences split their attention between TV/OTT and social media. Kenya's YouTube culture is vibrant in news/education. However, the micro-payments edge that helps Instagram/TikTok does less for YouTube, where revenue still leans on advertising markets and premium subscriptions.



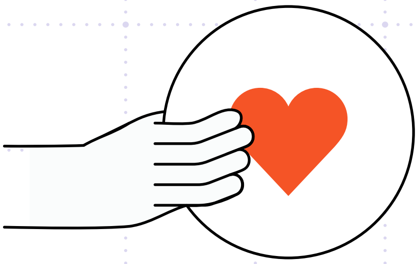
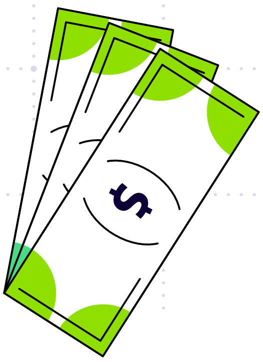
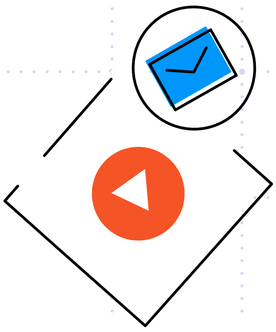
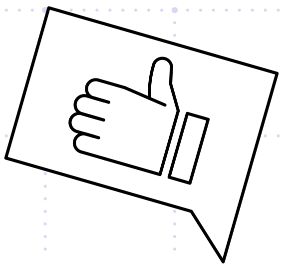
By contrast, Instagram's native monetisation is non-existent for African creators. Right now, bonuses are the only way Instagram compensates creators. These bonuses are paid on 31 December and apply to reels, carousels, and single-image posts. However, Instagram Bonuses are currently invite-only for creators in South Korea and the US. Subscriptions are available but roll out in select countries with strict eligibility criteria; Meta's help pages list country availability and do not include Egypt among the early markets. For an Egyptian creator, that's a foggier path to predictable Instagram income than YouTube's and TikTok's.

Additionally, audience size on other platforms outstrips Instagram's in Egypt. In early 2025, Instagram's ad reach in Egypt was about 17% of the population, while YouTube reached 43%, and TikTok reached 41.3 million adults aged 18+. The latter platforms offer a much larger native market for discovery and watch time. That gap skews the odds of going viral, converting brand briefs, and compounding revenue away from Instagram.

In Egypt, the bottleneck isn't whether audiences can stream; it's where creators get discovered and reliably paid—and on that axis, YouTube outperforms Instagram.

Two practical conclusions follow for creators. First, treat YouTube like an asset class: build franchises (the same show, new episode), organise metadata (titles that answer intent, chapters that create skim-ability, consistent thumbnails), and localise when it's cheap to do so (subtitles for export in Nigeria/ South Africa; Arabic nuance for Egypt; regional tags for Kenya). Second, use brand channels as second screens: negotiate usage rights and parallel uploads so the same creative earns twice—once as a sponsored integration on your channel, and again as an owned asset on the brand's channel, which continues to collect views and search clicks.

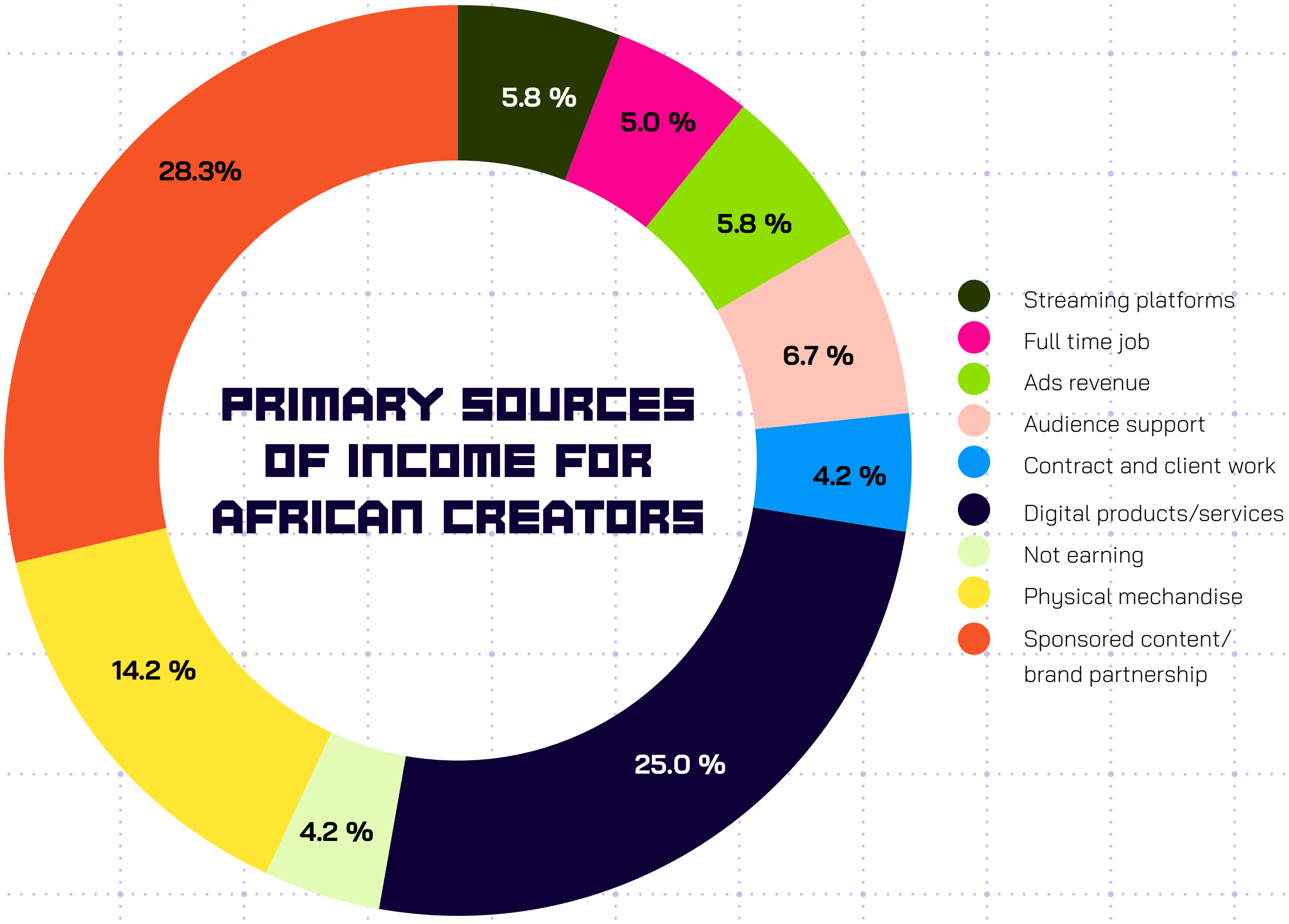
When YouTube reaches 43% of Egyptians and TikTok outpaces Instagram by tens of millions, the odds of virality, brand conversion, and compounding revenue shift decisively away from Instagram.

CHAPTER 03

HOW ARE AFRICAN CREATORS MAKING MONEY?

Chapter 1 and 2 mapped Africa's creator landscape—who the creators are, where they operate, and how attention is distributed across platforms. Now we turn to the second-order question: how are creators actually earning?
Across the continent, creators earn through a mix of direct and indirect monetisation models, though few rely on a single source of income. The survey points to three dominant pathways: brand partnerships, platform payouts, and self-owned ventures.



BRAND PARTNERSHIPS

In our data, 28.3% of respondents cited brand partnerships as their primary source of income. For most mid- to high-tier creators, commercial collaborations with consumer brands, telecoms, fintechs, and global platforms are the largest and most consistent revenue streams.

Over the past five years, the number of brands working directly with African creators has increased dramatically. Multinational consumer companies have recognised the cultural influence creators hold among young audiences. In markets such as Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya, influencer marketing has become a mainstream component of brand communication strategies. All the creators we spoke to have worked with a brand in some capacity to promote their products, events, or services.

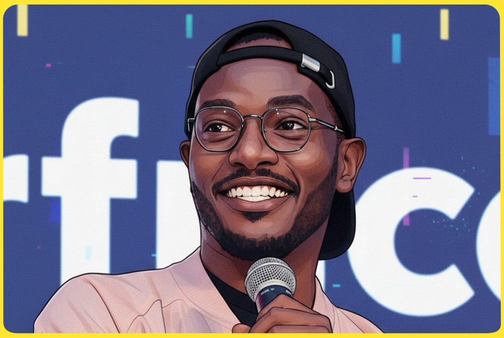
Njugush

In percentage terms, 60% of revenue comes from corporates and brands, while the other 40% comes from the audience.

Tosin Samuels (TSpices)

Today, I earn from four major streams: YouTube ads, Facebook and Twitter content, brand deals, meal plan sales, and occasional appearances on cooking shows or for public speaking. YouTube remains my most consistent source of income because it pays monthly, even from old videos. Brand partnerships are also steady, and together they make up about 60% of my earnings.

Roy Kanyi



The primary revenue streams supporting my work as a creator are brand collaborations. That has been the biggest source of income and has allowed me to scale the business. With that income, I now have a management team that sources brand partnerships, and I've been able to employ two people. They earn a percentage of the revenue we generate, so not only are partnerships bringing in money, but they have also created employment. I've also brought on board someone who handles PR and communications, as well as editors, again, made possible through brand income.

This evolution was driven in part by the pandemic-era digital boom, which forced brands to shift attention to online communities. Creators became the bridge between companies and digitally native consumers, their authenticity offering what traditional advertising could not. From unboxing videos to hashtag campaigns and live events, brand collaborations became a primary way for creators to generate income and for brands to build local credibility.

Charity Ekezie

I would say mostly my money comes from brand partnerships. They don't come all the time; they come maybe once in three months, maybe once in six months. But when they do, it's something that I'm excited to do. The platform allows me to share my message and allows people to see me for who I am all over the world. Also, I believe that with time, money will come from different sources.

Brand partnerships with creators typically take three forms.

SPONSORED CONTENT

Paid videos, posts, or features promoting a product or service.

Short-term (campaign-based)

EVENT PARTNERSHIPS

Hosting gigs, appearances, and ambassador roles.

Medium-term

ENDORSEMENTS

Multi-month or annual contracts with major brands.

Long-term, limited to top-tier creators

PRODUCT SALES

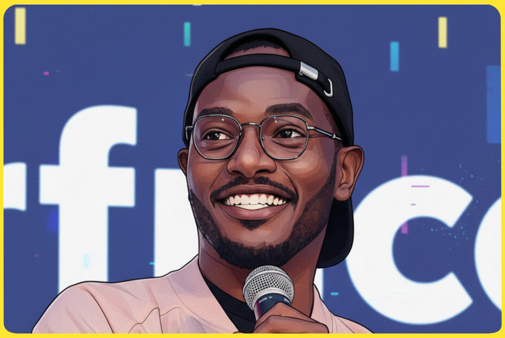
Beyond brand deals, a growing number of creators are monetising through products and services they own. In our survey, 14% of respondents listed physical merchandise—such as apparel, art prints, or branded accessories—as a primary source of income, while 24.8% reported earning from digital products.

Digital product sales outperform physical ones because they scale more easily across borders and require minimal upfront capital. Popular formats include e-books, online courses, photography presets, templates, and digital art. These forms of monetisation are especially prominent among creators in Nigeria and South Africa, who often combine brand income with self-owned ventures.
For physical goods, fashion and lifestyle creators have built sustainable micro-brands by leveraging loyal audiences. However, logistics, production costs, and currency volatility often erode margins. Digital sales, by contrast, have lower friction and are particularly effective for creators with audiences abroad.

An interesting way this Direct-to-Consumer model manifests is through speaking engagements. Many respondents, particularly those in the tech and lifestyle sectors, reported receiving invitations to speak about their expertise or their creator businesses at conferences and events. These engagements not only provide direct revenue but also offer indirect benefits. In addition to being paid, creators reach new audiences, helping them grow their existing follower base and ultimately increase their earning potential.

Digital product sales outperform physical ones because they scale easily across borders.

Roy Kanyi



Another income stream is speaking engagements. For example, I recently attended an event hosted by Safaricom, the largest telecommunications network in Kenya. Opportunities like this put me on the map and generate income, whether directly or indirectly. Beyond payment, networking itself is a form of income. Building relationships and connections often matters more than what's in your account; it's about the value of your network. TikTok also creates these opportunities by flying us out to meet other creators from different regions. Recently, we were in Cape Town and Johannesburg for the TikTok Creators Awards and the Safety Internet Summit. I consider those networking opportunities as part of my income streams.

Charity Ekezie

I've gotten a couple of speaking engagements. Speaking engagements have helped me travel a lot. My visibility on this platform has actually helped me travel to as many countries as I can count, to be able to do some work related to my content. So that's a win.

PLATFORM PAYOUTS

Only 5.8% of respondents identified platform payouts as their major source of income. These programs represent the most structured monetisation channel but are unevenly distributed across the continent.
Platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook operate revenue-sharing schemes that pay creators a portion of ad or licensing revenue. The YouTube Partner Program, for instance, pays creators per thousand views, while TikTok's Creator Rewards Program and Facebook Reels bonuses provide variable payouts based on engagement.
However, the benefits are limited to specific geographic areas. African creators typically earn under $1 per 1,000 views, compared to $3–10 in the United States or Europe. Payment ineligibility, inconsistent CPMs, and weaker advertiser demand for local traffic further constrain revenue. While these platforms have democratised visibility, they have not yet democratised financial opportunity at the same rate.
Despite these limitations, platform payouts remain an important revenue stream for top-tier creators and an aspirational goal for micro-creators seeking recurring income.

FAN SUPPORT AND DONATIONS

A smaller share—6.6% of respondents—earn from fan tipping or donations. These include one-off contributions via YouTube Super Thanks, TikTok Live gifts, or third-party platforms like Selar's Show Love feature.

Globally, this approach has reshaped how creators earn over the past five years. In Africa, adoption has been slower, but over the past two years, notable progress has been made as homegrown solutions emerge to address local payment and currency challenges.
One leading example is Selar, a Nigerian digital commerce platform that enables creators to sell content and accept fan donations. In 2023, Selar launched Show Love, a tipping feature that allows creators to accept one-time or recurring payments in over 10 currencies, including the naira, dollar, and cedi. The platform claimed that within its first month, over 2,000 creators had created Show Love pages, spanning musicians, comedians, podcasters, and writers.

On YouTube and TikTok, features such as "Super Thanks", "Live Gifts", and "Video Gifts" are gaining traction among creators in South Africa and Kenya, where eligibility

Charity Ekezie

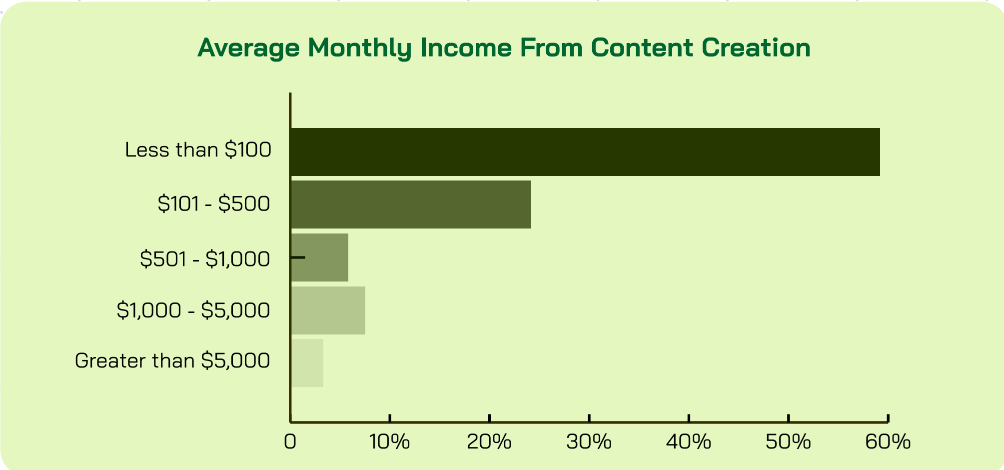
Sometimes I earn money from the TikTok LIVE stream if I go live and my community decides to reward me with gifts. Those are the only ways I make money as a creator on TikTok. It's mostly really brand partnerships.

thresholds have recently been introduced. Individual contributions may be small, but their cumulative effect provides working capital for content production, travel, or creative experimentation.
Despite its promise, the direct-to-fan model faces practical hurdles, including the fact that the average African has very low disposable income. This, consequently, limits consistent contributions. Therefore, for many creators, success in this model depends not just on fan enthusiasm but on diaspora engagement. African creators with international audiences tend to receive higher patronage rates, as fans abroad can afford to provide recurring support.

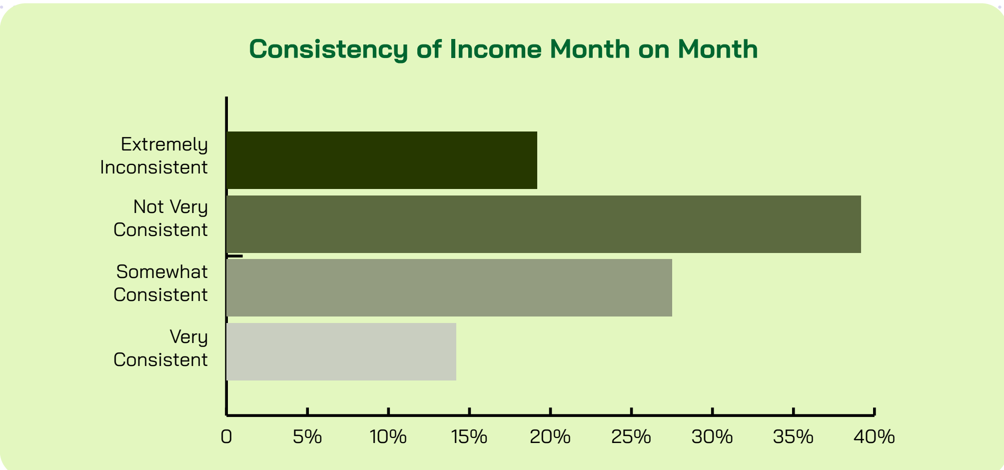
A lot of creators success in the direct-to-fan model depends not just on fan enthusiasm but on dispora engagement.

INCOME SIZE AND CONSISTENCY

Despite the growing diversity of monetisation channels, many African creators still face low, unpredictable income. According to our survey, about six in ten respondents earn less than US$100 per month from their creative work.



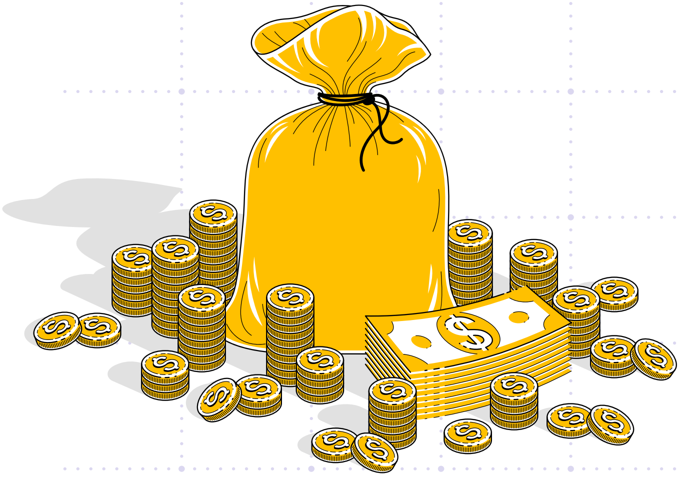
For most micro- and mid-tier creators, earnings are sporadic and heavily dependent on sporadic brand deals or one-off product sales. Even top-tier creators experience variability, often tied to seasonal campaigns, platform algorithm changes, or shifts in audience engagement.



Several factors contribute to this volatility:

1 AUDIENCE PAYMENT CONSTRAINTS

In many African markets, consumers already subscribe to multiple streaming services (Netflix, Showmax, DStv), creating what some creators call "subscription fatigue." Expecting audiences to pay directly for individual creators limits pricing flexibility and makes recurring income from fans difficult.

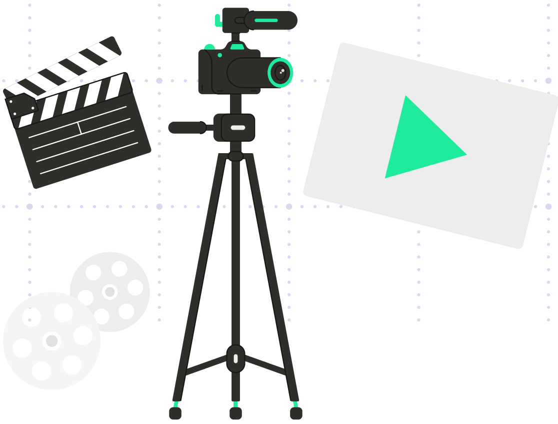


2 PLATFORM LIMITATIONS

Revenue-sharing programs, while structured, offer minimal payouts relative to global benchmarks. Creators typically earn under US$1 per 1,000 views, which is a fraction of what peers earn in the U.S. or Europe. Inconsistent CPMs, eligibility restrictions, and lower advertiser demand on local content exacerbate income instability.

3 IRREGULAR BRAND PARTNERSHIPS

Brand deals are often the most reliable income source, but they are inherently cyclical. Many creators report periods of several months without campaigns, meaning cash flow can fluctuate sharply.

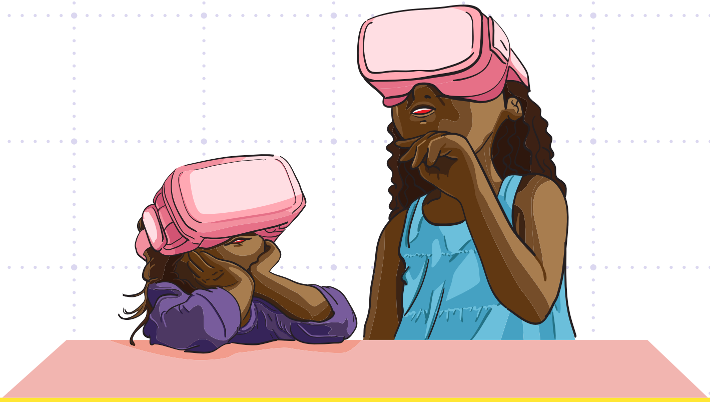


4 OPERATIONAL COSTS

Even when revenue is steady, creators often reinvest heavily in content production—from equipment and software to hiring editors or social media managers—thereby reducing net earnings and increasing financial pressure.

Income volatility also has long-term implications for growth. Unpredictable revenue makes it difficult to plan investments in scaling content, hiring teams, or expanding into new platforms. As a result, many creators juggle multiple monetisation channels simultaneously, combining brand deals, product sales, fan donations, and platform payouts to smooth income. Even then, the financial base remains precarious for most, particularly those in the micro- and mid-tier tiers.

This context highlights a critical point: while African creators now operate in a market with enormous audience potential, monetisation lags behind reach. The ecosystem is still maturing, and sustainable revenue models are concentrated in the upper tiers or among creators who successfully diversify income streams.



THE EVOLUTION OF A CREATOR'S MONETISATION PRIORITIES

An important trend we must point out is that as creators mature, their focus often shifts from one platform and monetisation channel to another in pursuit of deeper engagement and more reliable income. These shifts are not random. They are often deliberate moves designed to maximise the value of their growing influence and audience.

Early in their journey, most creators are focused on visibility. As we've established, for many African creators, that visibility often begins on TikTok or X (formerly Twitter), where short-form videos, memes, and commentary spread rapidly. Once they establish a consistent following, many transition to YouTube for two main reasons:

1. To produce longer-form content that meets growing audience demand, and
2. To access a more reliable income stream through platform payouts.

YouTube's long-form ecosystem enables creators to repurpose viral clips into extended storytelling, vlogs, or educational formats that generate revenue long after publication. This progression is evident among Nigerian skit makers like Mr Macaroni, who first built massive reach on X and Instagram before expanding to YouTube, where his sketches now attract millions of monetisable views.

However, the direction of movement isn't always linear. Creators focused on brand partnerships may shift from YouTube back to Instagram or TikTok, where visual immediacy and stronger audience intimacy drive better conversion for sponsored content. In short, the choice of platform and monetisation channel always reflects the creator's current goals and where their most valuable audiences

LAYI WASABI

First-Order shift: From X to YouTube.
Second-Order shift: From content creation to acting in movies.

IFE OF DIARY OF NAIJA GIRL

Second-Order Shift: from influencing to selling cosmetic products.

APROKO DOCTOR

First-Order Shift: from X to YouTube
Second-Order Shift: from content creation to starting AwaDoc.

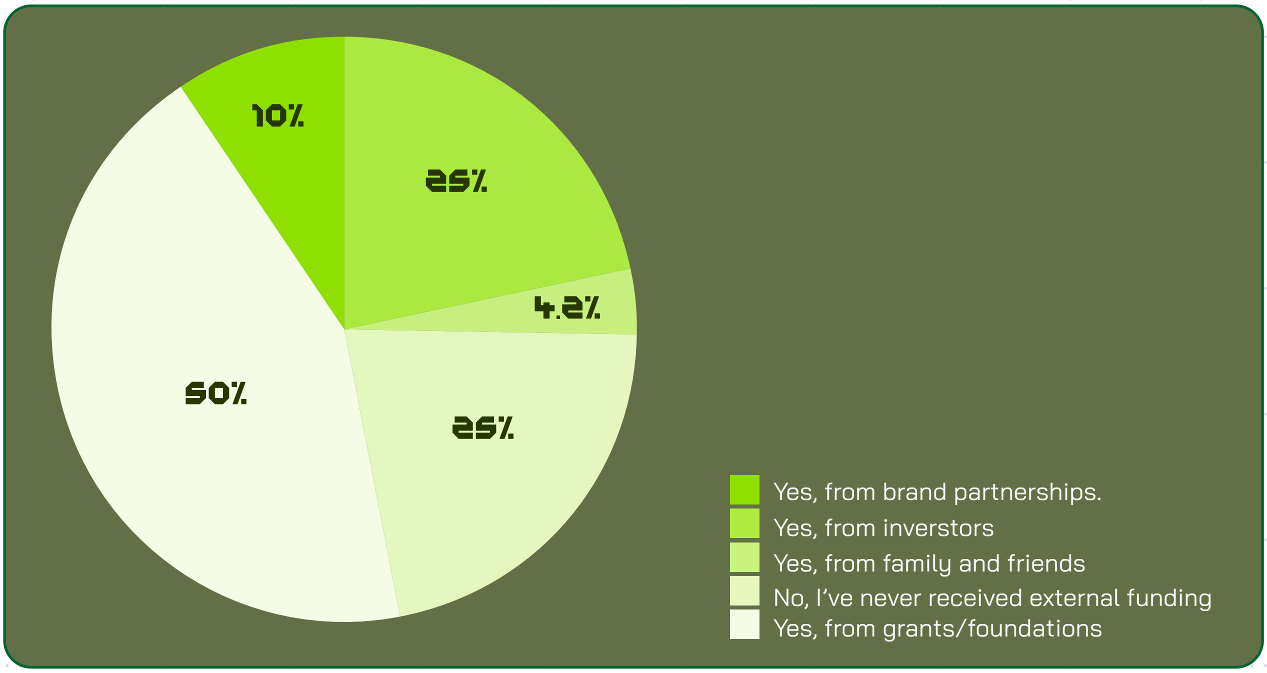
CHAPTER 04

WHO IS FUNDING AFRICAN CREATORS?

When we talk about scale and capturing value efficiently in the business world, a third parameter, aside from demand and supply, comes into the equation: expansion capital. A simple business is inherently limited in the number of people it can serve; thus, expanding capacity for value creation and increasing the efficiency of the process requires some form of external empowerment, often in the form of expansion capital.

In the context of the African creator economy, this means if the goal is to grow the ecosystem at scale, visibility and talent alone are not enough. Creators need capital to expand their operations, invest in content production, and ultimately, turn their operations into sustainable businesses. Therefore, in this chapter, we're turning our attention to the question of what capital deployment looks like in the sector.

The African creator economy is a very fragmented landscape when viewed through the lens of who is funding it. While the global creator economy has grown into a multi-billion-dollar industry attracting venture funds, strategic brand investments, and startup incubators, Africa's creator ecosystem remains heavily informal and unstructured. Most creators operate independently, with limited access to the kind of financial support that enables sustained growth. One in two African creators surveyed have not received any kind of external funding to power their creative work. Among those who have, the most common sources are friends, grants, and brand partnerships.



SELF-FUNDING AND COMMUNITY FINANCING

For most African creators, the first and often only source of funding is themselves. Self-financing through personal income or savings. Across Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa, creators consistently describe a similar pattern: they typically begin with little to no external investment. Many fund their first equipment purchases, such as a camera, a laptop, or a microphone, through side jobs, small savings, or collective contributions from friends and family.

Approximately 25% of our respondents reported receiving financial support from family and friends to fund their creative projects.

Community funding provides a secondary, yet equally vital, layer. Informal creator circles, such as small collectives, production hubs, and peer networks, often act as de facto incubators. They share costs, lend equipment, exchange skills, and sometimes pool money to help one another complete projects.

In Nigeria, creative collectives such as WeTalkSound evolved from peer support systems into recognised community platforms, leveraging pooled resources and partnerships to amplify members' work. The same holds for George Gachara's The Nest in Kenya.

To be very honest, a lot of my productions are self-funded. I went from doing online skits to doing my stand up special - Through Thick and Thin (TTNT), which is in its sixth year. But doing my shows demand a lot of money upfront, as is the norm for a lot of creatives, you do not have bulk cash lying around.

Njugush

My medium for funding TTNT has been through my people and my audience directly.

Yes, brand money comes in but it is slow, and I sometimes have to wait 90 days after a campaign is completed to receive the entire fee. So for funding big projects like TTNT, I have to plan towards it for a long time. The last edition TTNT5 was a 6000 capacity strong show and that meant we had to have crazy screens and a crazy big stage, a lot of additional arrangements like security for the location, and then a production budget because it was recorded. My medium for funding TTNT has been through my people and my audience directly. So I sell tickets, and after the show, I make the recording available on my website for a small charge.

In terms of institutions, I have tried banks but nothing comes through. As a creator, since you do not have formal or consistent income, you typically do not pass a bank's assessment. I have also tried to apply for some grants, but they do not come through as well as most of them are not digital and social media oriented. I mean, it is easier for a farmer or someone who owns an SME to get a small business loan or a grant, compared to a creative business.

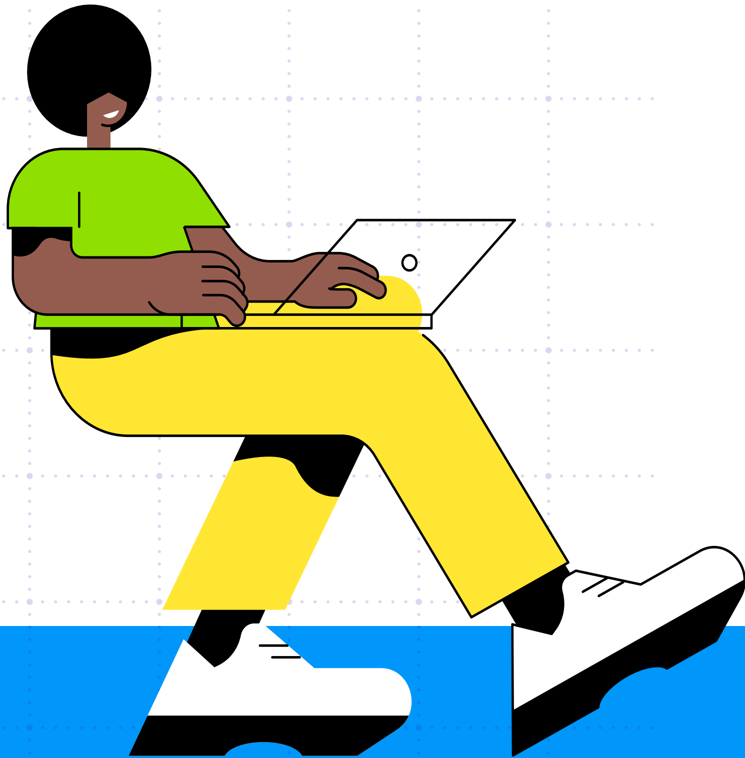
BRAND PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMERCIAL DEALS

Aside from being a source of income, brand partnerships and commercial deals effectively serve as micro-financing mechanisms. Brands cover production costs, pay for campaign deliverables, and often leave creators with capital they can reinvest into their craft. For many creators, this income substitutes what, in more mature economies, would come from seed funding or ad revenue. Some creators have used consistent brand deals to upgrade their gear, hire small teams, or expand into other ventures such as merchandise or studio rentals.

However, brand partnerships are not a sustainable funding system in themselves. They are short-term, campaign-based, and heavily dependent on platform visibility. Creators whose audience demographics or engagement metrics fall outside a brand's target often struggle to attract or retain deals, regardless of talent. Additionally, payment timelines and transparency remain inconsistent across markets.

The power imbalance between brands and creators also persists: most deals are one-sided, with limited negotiation room and no legal frameworks to protect creator rights.

Another limitation is creative compromise. As creators increasingly tailor content to fit brand aesthetics or campaign goals, their independence becomes increasingly limited. For many, commercial viability becomes the defining measure of success; thus, they might not be willing to experiment with their content once they find a style that "works."



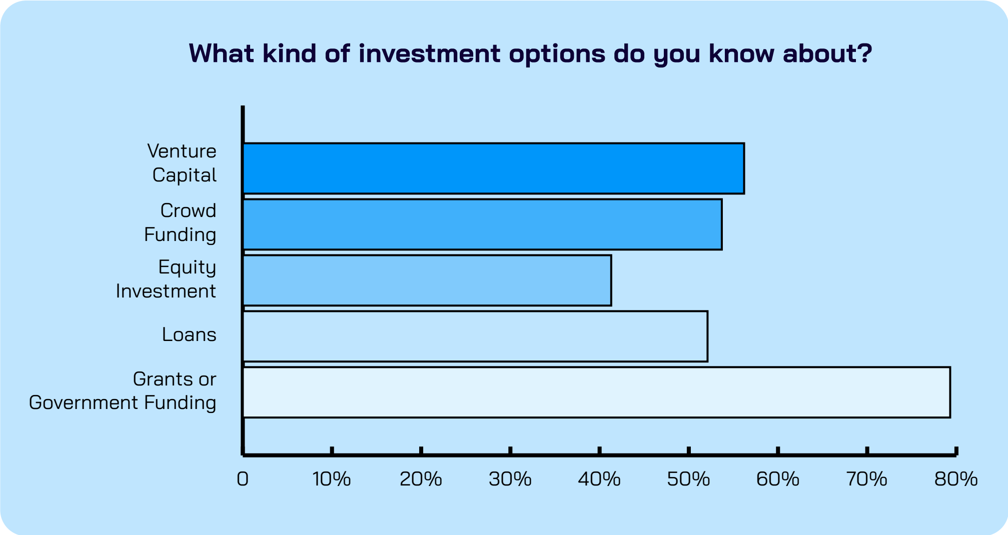
PUBLIC INTEREST INSTITUTIONS VIA GRANTS

Grants and institutional programs have long served as the bridge between art and public good in Africa's creative landscape. Long before the creator economy emerged as a digital phenomenon, cultural institutions, development agencies, and foundations were among the few consistent sources of external support for African artists, filmmakers, and innovators. Today, these mechanisms continue to play a key, though limited, role in funding creators whose work intersects with culture, education, and social impact.

Institutional support for African creatives is not new. Since the early 2000s, programs supported by the British Council, Goethe-Institut, Ford Foundation, and UNESCO have provided training and grants to artists, journalists, and cultural entrepreneurs. These initiatives built critical infrastructure, including creative hubs, festivals, and residencies, that helped define Africa's creative landscape.

However, the emergence of digital creators has challenged this framework: grants designed initially for arts and cultural preservation now intersect with a creator class more concerned with content, commerce, and audience growth.

Aside from these legacy institutions, social media platforms have given out grants as one way to help creators grow. YouTube, for instance, ran the #YouTube Black Voices Fund, which awarded grants to African creators between 2020 and 2022. Creators from countries like Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa were key beneficiaries. Notably, Dimma Umeh, and Lasizwe Dambuza are prominent examples of this program. Others like Tomike Adeoye have used the program's capital and training to scale their content operations. TikTok's Rising Voices initiative is another example of a similar program.



INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT

While Africa's creator economy has grown in visibility, it remains disconnected from formal investment systems. Our data revealed that institutional investment in the African creator economy represents only a small portion of the overall capital flow into the ecosystem.

WHY IS THIS THE CASE?

Institutional investors have not found the sector viable enough to invest in, and this could be due to two reasons:

1. They haven't been exposed to viable creator-led businesses/projects, and
2. Many creator businesses are not yet structured or scalable enough to justify investment.

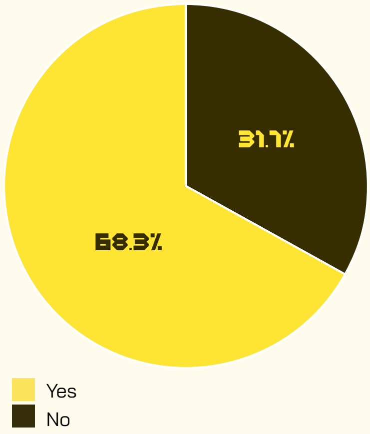
The data supports both reasons.

1 LIMITED ACCESS

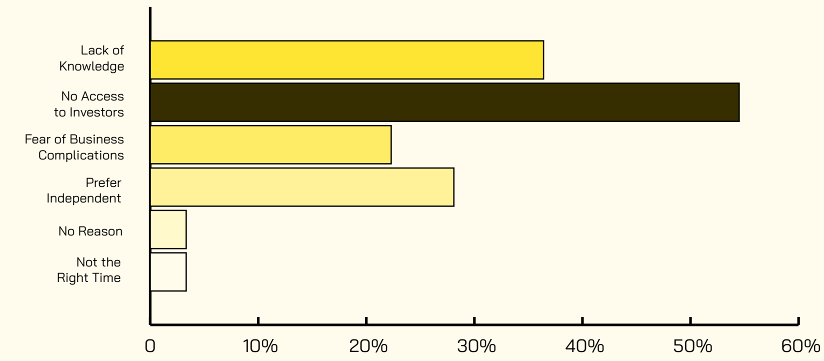
Only about 4.2% have received funding directly from investors.
Access itself is a major barrier. While 31.7% of respondents said they have pitched to investors, over half (54.2%) said they have no access to investors at all. Another 36.7% said they are unaware of any existing investment activity targeting creator-led businesses.

Together, these figures reveal an ecosystem that operates largely outside the reach of the capital markets.

Have you ever pitched to investors?



Reasons for not pitching to investors?

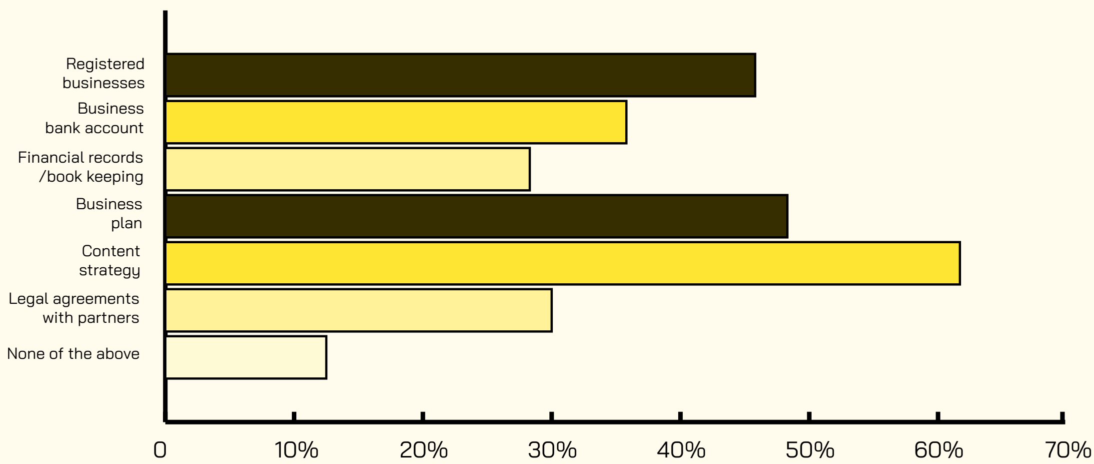


2 ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE BUSINESS/LACK OF PROPER TRAINING

Even where access exists, investor readiness remains weak. Our survey shows that over half of African creators still don't manage their operations professionally, even though many have registered business entities. This suggests an awareness of what's required, but also uncertainty about whether it will pay off.

As a result, many continue to approach their creative work as a side hustle rather than a primary enterprise. Around 40% of creators still identify their work as part-time. The underlying issue is not a lack of ambition but a shortage of skills and systems. 71% identified "business strategy and management" as one of the top three skills needed to attract investment, and about 40% cited "business skills training" as critical to their long-term sustainability.

Do you have any of the following business structures in place?



3 STRUCTURAL AND ECONOMIC BARRIERS

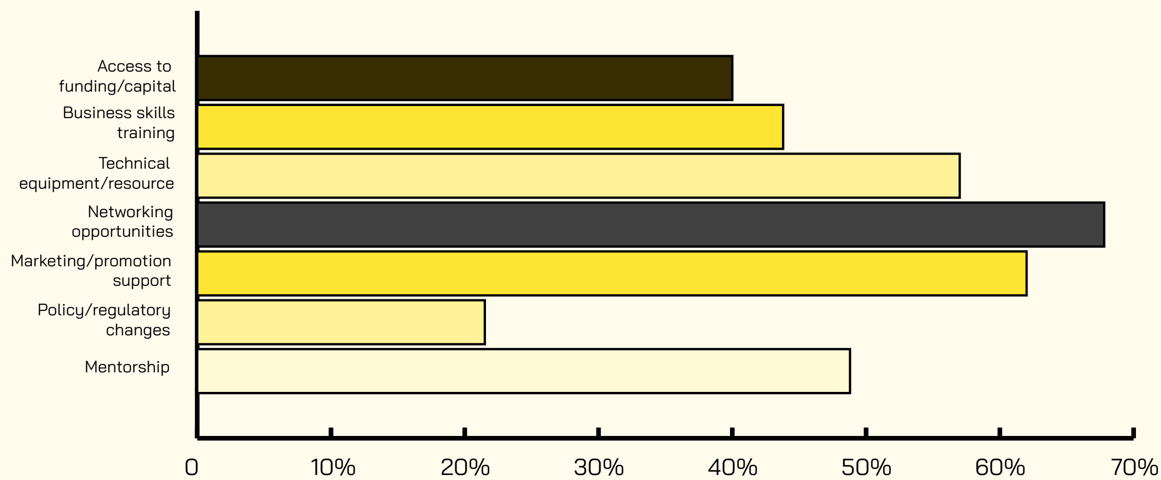
Beyond business acumen, structural barriers limit how far creators can scale. Many must allocate substantial portions of their income to compensate for unreliable internet access, power supply, and logistics infrastructure, costs that more mature markets take for granted. These operational burdens diminish margins, reduce consistency, and weaken investor confidence.

Approximately 60% of respondents said that access to “technical equipment and production resources” is essential to their sustainability, highlighting how infrastructural limitations intersect with funding challenges. Even capable creators face growth ceilings in markets where basic production and distribution inputs remain costly or unreliable.

Achieving the projected $17.84 billion market by 2030 will require more than visibility or engagement metrics. It will depend on whether creators can build structured, scalable enterprises that attract sustained investment.

This next phase of growth also demands a shift in framing. Creativity must be recognised as an investable asset class, one capable of generating measurable economic value when backed by capital, governance, and strategy. For that to happen, both creators and investors must align around a clearer understanding of what makes a creator business investable.

What would make the biggest difference to your sustainability as a creator?



CHAPTER 05

ARE AFRICAN CREATORS INVESTABLE?

THE ANATOMY OF AN "INVESTABLE" CREATOR

In conversations around capital deployment, the key question is not only where the money goes, but whether it should go there at all. Put simply, are African creators worth investing in?

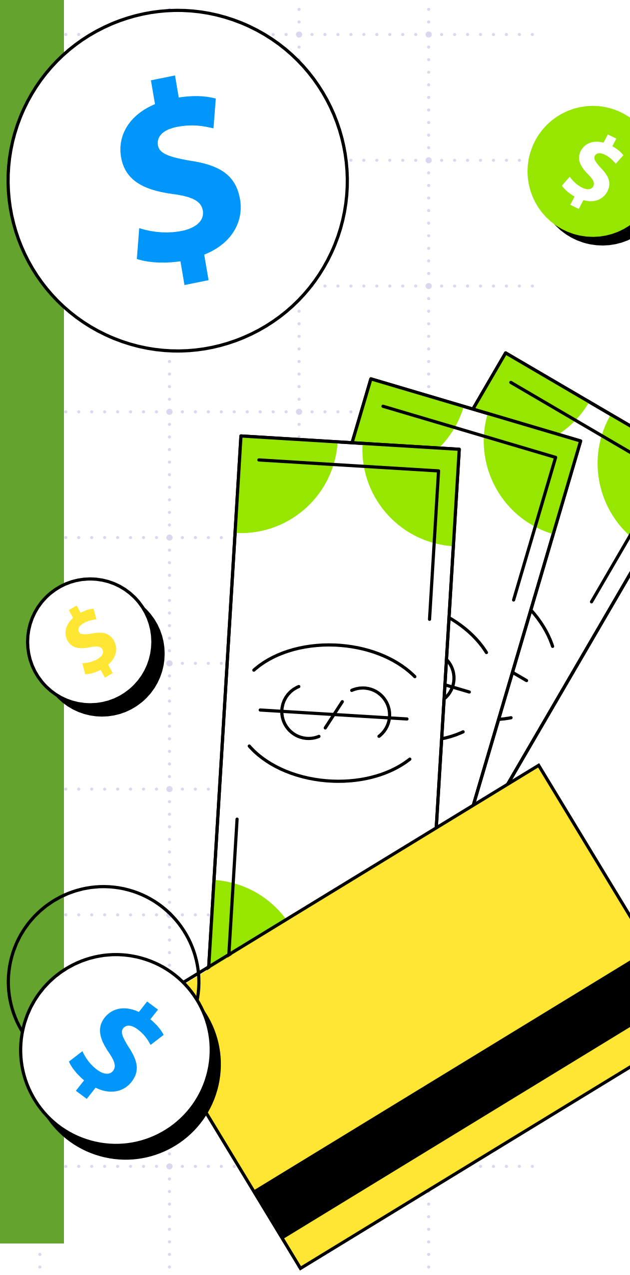
In the startup world, being "investable" refers to possessing qualities that mitigate risk and enhance the potential for long-term value creation. These include elements such as a robust business model, effective governance, well-defined growth plans, and financial discipline and transparency.

These are the fundamentals that draw investors' attention. When applied to the creator economy, the concept of investability provides a framework for judging whether a creator is worth investing in.

It refers to the traits, systems, and behaviours that make a creator attractive to brands, collaborators, and potential investors. It signals that a creator is not just producing content for short-term attention but building a business that is structured, strategic, and capable of long-term growth.

Investment in creators is, at its core, investment in intellectual property, brand equity, and community trust. These are intangible assets, but they can generate tangible, scalable returns when structured correctly.

For investors, identifying the right creators is less about chasing virality and more about recognising operational maturity and long-term potential. So what do investors look at when investing in creators? What are the traits of creators at the stage where they are ripe for investment capital?



> **A way to assess a creator's investability is to understand where they are in the Creator Lifecycle.**

The Creator Lifecycle is a framework, laid out in Communiqué 35, on how to think about how creators and their businesses evolve. It maps the typical progression of a creator's career from early experimentation to long-term enterprise building.

A creator starts from the Inception phase, where they test ideas, platforms, and audience responses. They then progress to the Growth phase, where their primary focus is to scale the influence and attention they have acquired and convert it into sustainable income.

If they are successful, they move to the final two phases: Expansion and Legacy.

STAGE	DESCRIPTION	SHARE OF CREATORS (INDICATIVE [%])	KEY FILTER/ CHALLENGE
Inception	The entry phase, where creators are experimenting, building visibility, and figuring out their voice.	100%	Sustainability & clarity: Many drop out due to inconsistency or lack of early traction.
Growth	Creators who have found some footing and audience traction begin early monetisation.	~35-40% make it here	Retention & monetisation: They must convert attention into consistent income.
Expansion	Established creators running structured operations, hiring help, and building scalable products.	~10-15% make it here	Systems & scale: The challenge shifts from creating to managing a business.
Legacy	Mature creators turning influence into institutions, ventures, or investments.	~3-5% reach this stage	Longevity & ownership: Maintaining relevance and translating fame into enduring value.

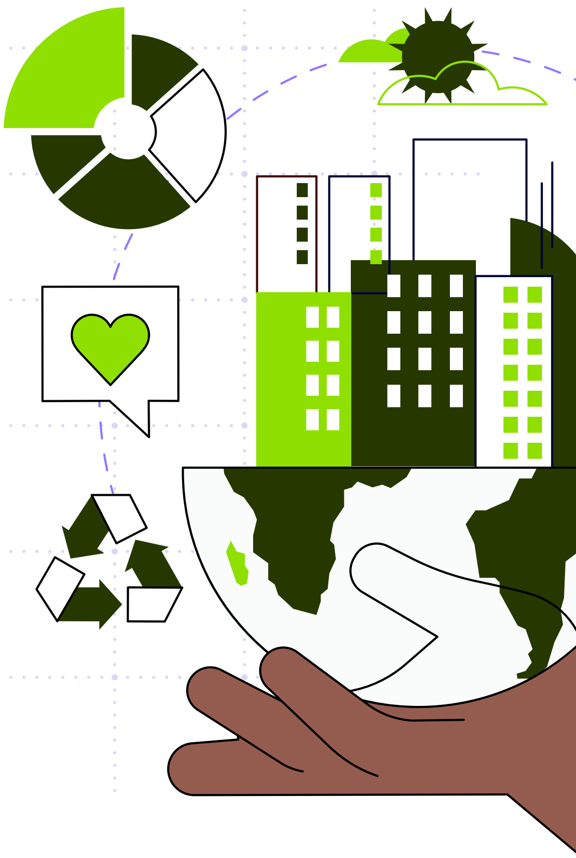
From this standpoint, not all creators are investable. Creators are at different maturity levels, and therefore, Investable creators are usually well into the cycle, in the latter part of the Growth stage or already in the Expansion phase.

By this point, the creator has proven market demand and begins to build a structure around their work by hiring collaborators, formalising processes, and developing business products or services. This is often where the creator becomes a viable investment target: there is a clear brand, consistent revenue, and an identifiable growth path.

While our focus has been towards funding creator enterprises, it's important to note that creators at different stages need different kinds of capital. For investors and ecosystem builders, this lifecycle offers a valuable lens to determine the type of support that is required.

For instance, during the inception phase, skills development and mentorship on creative direction might be the most useful; strategic partnerships and business coaching at the growth phase, operational funding at expansion, and equity or acquisition conversations at legacy.

Understanding the lifecycle helps both the creators and investors deploy resources more effectively, ensuring that capital meets creators where they are, not where investors they are or should be.



CREATOR INVESTABILITY SCORECARD

One of the recurring questions in our research was how to determine when a creator is truly "investment-ready." Many creators aspire to scale but lack a clear sense of where they stand in that journey.

To address this gap, we developed the Creator Investability Scorecard—a framework that helps creators assess the maturity of their businesses as a proxy for investment readiness. It offers a structured way to measure progress, identify gaps, and benchmark growth across the creator lifecycle.

We used nine parameters, including financial management, posting and platform consistency to investment literacy, that reflect the maturity and growth potential of a creator business based on our research. Together, they capture how established a creator's operations, audience, and systems are.

Each parameter is scored on a scale of 1 to 5, where higher scores indicate greater maturity. The combined score across all nine parameters provides a maximum total of 45. The higher a creator scores, the more likely they are ready to scale. The score is essentially an indicator of how far along they are in the creator lifecycle.

The Investability Scorecard is less about labels and more about self-diagnosis. It helps creators understand where they are in the business growth cycle, what gaps limit their scalability, and which areas could unlock capital readiness. For instance, a creator who is still in the Inception phase seeking investment is likely to keep getting disappointed.

However, if they understand that what they need to do is to focus on what will take them to the next phase in the cycle where they look more presentable to investors, it becomes easier and rewarding.

TO GET THE MOST VALUE, CREATORS SHOULD:

01 Score honestly based on current data, not aspirations.

02 Review scores after a set period of time (quarterly or yearly) to track progress and set development priorities.

03 Compare across dimensions to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses.

04 Use the results to guide conversations with mentors, investors, or accelerator programs.

The scorecard could also be a useful tool for investors. The scorecard provides a standardised lens for assessing risk and growth potential in the creator economy.

It introduces a data-driven approach to evaluating creator-led enterprises, shifting investment conversations away from intuition or popularity metrics toward measurable business indicators. This framework allows investors, accelerators, and development partners to segment creators by readiness level, design targeted interventions, and allocate capital more efficiently.

HOW TO USE THE SCORECARD

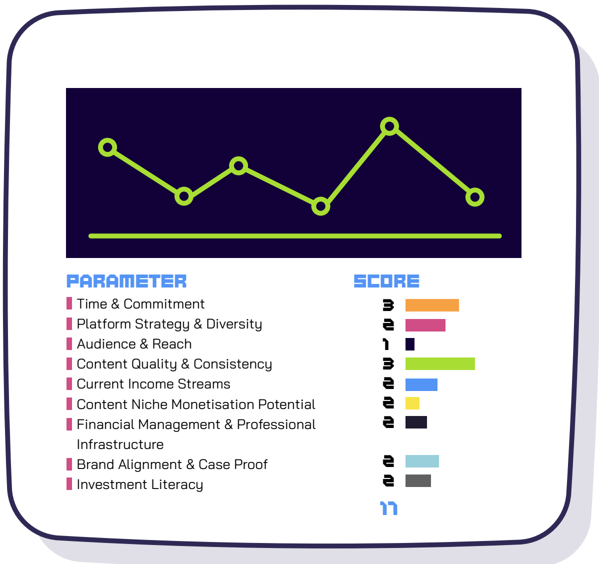
A full table of parameters, scoring dimensions, and category thresholds is available for download *here*.

Jay is a content creator who focuses on current affairs and news commentary. He produces short reaction videos, commentary on trending topics, and vox pop interviews with people on the street.

Over the past three years, he has built a modest following on Facebook and TikTok and is now looking to expand his reach by launching a YouTube channel with longer-form content.

Recently, he has started considering whether he's ready to approach investors for funding to support this new phase of growth.

When Jay completes the Creator Investability Scorecard, his results look like this:



Jay's total score is 17, placing him in the Nascent (Tier 3) category, just right on the verge of becoming an Emerging (tier 2) creator.

The Scorecard gives Jay a clearer roadmap. He now understands that in order to secure larger brand deals or seek more funding opportunities, he needs to solidify his content strategy, grow his audience consistently across platforms, and begin formalizing his operations.

By addressing these areas, he not only increases his investability but also builds a more sustainable creative business.

PARAMETER	SCORE	DESCRIPTION
Time & Commitment	3	Three years of consistent activity (5–10 hrs/week; regular posting).
Platform Strategy & Diversity	2	Active on two platforms but mostly duplicates content without optimization.
Audience & Reach	1	Under 10k followers; over 90% local audience.
Content Quality & Consistency	3	Posts 2–3 times weekly; recognisable segments; basic editing.
Current Income Streams	2	One income source (ads/sponsored posts), irregular.
Content Niche Monetisation Potential	2	Entertainment-oriented content—high engagement, low revenue potential.
Financial Management & Professional Infrastructure	2	Works solo with informal collaborators; minimal record-keeping, no contracts.
Brand Alignment & Case Proof	2	Occasional collaborations; niche limits broader brand appeal.
Investment Literacy	2	Aware of funding options but hasn't applied for any.

WHY INVESTABILITY MATTERS

Globally, the creator economy is experiencing an increased influx of capital, ranging from equity-based partnerships to direct investments. Funds dedicated to creators are starting to pop up, even on the continent. Since mid-2025, a number of private entities have announced their interest in the sector. In September 2025, Chude Jidenowo announced his Fourth Mainland Creator Fund, a $500,000 initiative that will provide direct capital injections to individual African creators. Similarly, Nigeria-based creator services provider Endow announced that it will begin receiving applications for its ₦12 million Creator Fund in November. These developments suggest that Africa's creator economy may be entering its capital formation stage, where creators are no longer just recipients of brand budgets or grants, but active participants in venture-backed ecosystems. And this is quite significant because capital is needed to fund risky bets on moonshots that will drive industry growth.

However, African creators must be better positioned to access this growing pool of funding, and that begins with being perceived not just as influencers but as business operators.

Being investment-ready opens the door to sustainable growth. It enables creators to expand their operations, invest in improved production infrastructure, hire skilled teams, and retain a greater share of the value they generate. Without the necessary structure and signals, however, creators risk being overlooked in a capital environment that prioritises scalability, professionalism, and predictability.

Many of these new African private funds have not announced what the rationale and selection strategies would be. Borrowing from the Slow Ventures playbook, these funds could move beyond one-off cash injections to focus on creator equity, business development, and long-term capacity building. By funding creators as founders, they can unlock a new generation of African creative enterprises that combine cultural influence with scalable, investor-grade business models.

WHAT COULD A CREATOR INVESTMENT VEHICLE LOOK LIKE? THE SLOW CREATOR FUND MODEL

In February 2025, U.S.-based venture capital firm Slow Ventures launched a $64 million Creator Fund, a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to help content creators build and scale full-fledged businesses. The fund, backed by institutional investors like the University of Michigan and MIT, represents Slow Ventures' belief that "creators are the next great entrepreneurs."

Partner Megan Lightcap explains that the creator's path to sustainability is an "inversion of business-building" because they are pioneering a new business model in which "distribution precedes product." The consequence of this, then, is that the creator is the business. The fund targets niche, founder-like creators with deep expertise and loyal audiences.
"There's a subset of creators who are almost founder-like in nature," Lightcap explains. "They understand their space deeply, see its problems, and create products or companies to solve them."

Slow Ventures invests $1 million to $3 million for roughly 10% equity in a creator's holding company. This structure gives creators flexibility to decide how to use the capital—whether to expand production, hire a team, launch a new venture, or explore joint partnerships. "We don't take board seats or give directives," Lightcap says. "We're trusting in the creator as a founder. They know their vertical and community best."

A group of creators operate like founders: they deeply understand their niche, identify its challenges, and build products or companies to address those gaps.

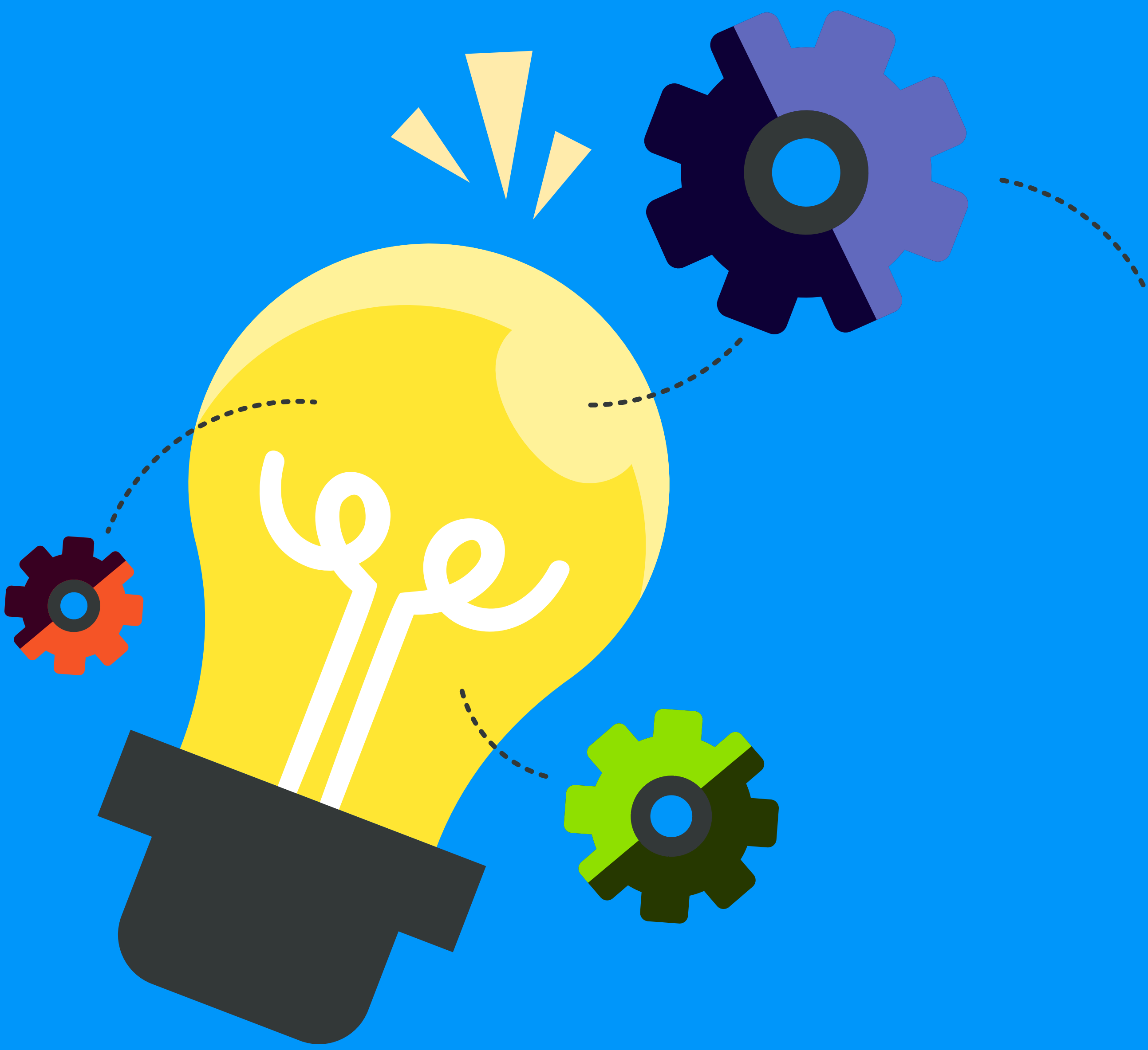
The fund's first investment went to Jonathan Katz-Moses, a woodworking creator with over 600,000 followers and a strong online community. His company, KM Tools, sells patented hand tools and educational resources and generates mid-seven-figure annual revenue, all with zero marketing spend.

Slow's investment is helping Katz-Moses expand his product line, operations, and team. The woodworking tools market reflects the kind of niche scalability Slow looks for; it is projected to be worth nearly $10 billion by 2030.

Slow Ventures' model offers a fascinating picture of how investors view (and evaluate) creators:

- **Depth beats reach.** A highly engaged niche audience is more investable than a large, passive one.
- **Monetisation matters.** The ability to turn influence into measurable business revenue is a prerequisite for funding.

In essence, according to Slow Ventures, the most investable creators are not just entertainers or influencers; they are vertical founders building scalable ecosystems around what they know best.



CHAPTER 06

CASE STUDIES AND INTERVIEWS FROM AFRICAN CREATORS

To complement the data we gathered from the survey, we spoke with eight creators from six African countries, each representing a different stage and approach within the continent's creator economy.

Their stories offer practical insight into how creators build, sustain, and scale their work.

Njugush: On Building a Sustainable Creative Venture in Kenya

To start off, could you give us a bit of background on your career in television, and how you transitioned into digital content creation?

I began on TV as part of a cast. I wasn't in production; the only creative input I had was tweaking scripts to suit delivery. The show I was on, The Real Househelps of Kawangware, was one of Kenya's biggest, and I stayed for about 100 episodes.

But the pay never improved. I was making about $50 to $60 (KES 7,000) per episode by the 100th episode, the same as when we started. Cast and crew members started to clamour for an increase. Tensions rose when the head scriptwriter asked to be officially credited on the show as a nod to his scriptwriting company.

Although his request was not a monetary one, the producers still refused. He left quietly, and I refused to sign a new contract without an increase. That was it — my character was killed off. Suddenly, I was out of work.

When I was on TV, I was very busy and did not have the time to take on extra gigs. For example, I would be called to MC, but the weekends were my time to rest from filming, so I would say no. But now, because I had become jobless, I went back to my Instagram, at the time I had about 14,000 followers.

This was late 2015/early 2016 and Instagram videos were 15 seconds and then increased to a minute. So I started to do skits, becoming one of the first Kenyans to use social media for content. Within that year, I grew my follower count to 25,000 and in 2017, I got my first brand call.

They reached out to ask if I could put their product within one of my videos. I didn't even know how to charge. My thinking was, "TV pays me $50 for an episode that takes two days to shoot, so maybe $10 per video online makes sense." I asked for $20, expecting to negotiate down and land at $10. Instead, the client said they had a $1,000 budget and asked me what I could do with that and how many videos I could make.

In my head, I thought "I'll do as many videos as you want", because I was excited. They sent me $200 upfront, and I eventually made them twelve videos.

I had never seen $1,000 from one project — on TV, a month of work gave me about $200. In the end, they never sent the balance, but even that $200 showed me the potential. With 25,000 followers, I could already earn more than TV.

How did your rates evolve from there?

I professionalised quickly. I have since learned to price content like a campaign, not a favour. Today, I charge up to KES 500,000 ($3,869) for a single branded video. However, for a campaign to be successful, I typically recommend more than one touch point, so I offer a bundle deal which a lot of companies prefer to take.

For this bundle, I charge a discounted fee of KES 800,000 to 850,000 ($6,200 - $6,600). The company gets two video posts, one in the first week of a month and the other in the third, a static picture post goes out in the second week, and then in the final week, Instagram stories.

Beyond Instagram collaborations, you've since grown your business and have diversified quite a bit.

How have you funded your creative business over the years, and what has your experience been with institutional funding or brand sponsorships?

To be very honest, a lot of my productions are self-funded. I went from doing online skits to doing my stand up special - Through Thick and Thin (TTNT), which is in its sixth year. But doing my shows demand a lot of money upfront, as is the norm for a lot of creatives, you do not have bulk cash lying around. Yes, brand money comes in but it is slow, and I sometimes have to wait 90 days after a campaign is completed to receive the entire fee.

So for funding big projects like TTNT, I have to plan towards it for a long time. The last edition TTNT5 was a 6000 capacity strong show and that meant we had to have crazy screens and a crazy big stage, a lot of additional arrangements like security for the location, and then a production budget because it was recorded.

My medium for funding TTNT has been through my people and my audience directly. So I sell tickets, and after the show, I make the recording available on my website for a small charge. In terms of institutions, I have tried banks but nothing comes through. As a creator, since you do not have formal or consistent income, you typically do not pass a bank's assessment. I have also tried to apply for some grants, but they do not come through as well as most of them are not digital and social media oriented.

I mean, it is easier for a farmer or someone who owns an SME to get a small business loan or a grant, compared to a creative business.

Let’s talk more about TTNT. You opted to monetise the show recordings via Pay-Per-View (PPV) and not advertising revenue from TV or YouTube. How did you decide on this strategy?

Last year’s show, **TTNT5 cost us over KES 9,500,000 ($73,529) to produce,** and out of that we had to raise KES 6,000,000 ($46,439). We charged $25 to $30 for the entry fee, but we also thought about what monetisation could be like afterwards.

If we decided to put it on YouTube, the CPM in Kenya does not pay as well as you’d expect. Selling it on my own would bring in more money than what I would be able to make off YouTube. Another option was to try the local TV channels, but then they even pay much lower.

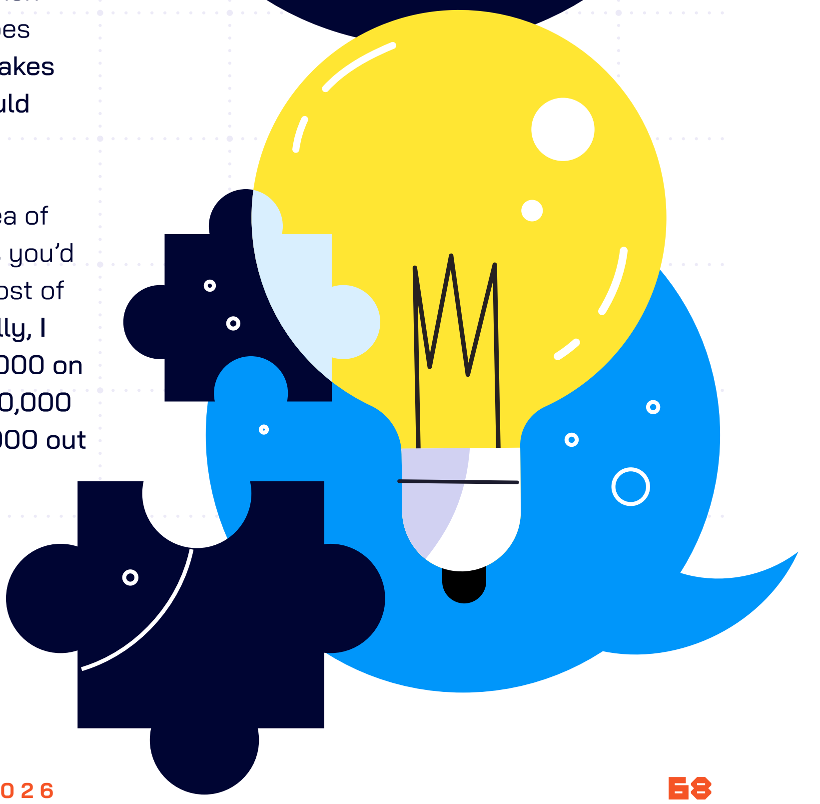
This is because when you go seeking out advertisers, they take advantage of you because you sought them out, not the other way round. They give you minimal money and want a lot of placements or videos in exchange so you end up overworking.
I actually got approached by a TV Station that wanted to air the show and they were quite big - with over **60 million** viewers on their channel.

However, when it came to revenue, they had to wait for advertisers to buy-in. Additionally, when advertising revenue does come, **the TV station takes 70% and my team would only get a 30% cut.**

I feel like the whole idea of being a creator, means you’d be able to make the most of your content. **Personally, I would rather make $1,000 on my own, than make $10,000 and get paid only $3,000 out of it.**

TTNT5 cost us over

$73,529



So we decided to opt for a subscription. This was also influenced by our audience expectations. We put out a survey after the show and we got responses asking how much they could pay to access the recording afterwards. And then, I thought - this is it. Because, I have 2.9 million followers on Instagram. If I am able to convert only 100,000 of them who opt to pay $1, that means I am getting an additional $100,000 in revenue. To make this in residual revenue, I did not even need 10% of my audience to convert. So that was how we decided to do pay-per-view.

SHOW	PRICE RANGES					
	TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
	KES	USD	KES	USD	KES	USD
TTNT2 - Miss Taken	100	0.77	150	1.16	250	1.93
TTNT3 - Labor of Love	200	1.55	300	2.32	500	3.87
TTNT4 - Just Kidding	250	1.93	375	2.90	625	4.84
TTNT5 - Reject!	350	2.71	525	4.06	875	6.77
Currently available for purchase on the Njugush Creatives Limited Website.						

Beyond subscriptions, what is your strategy for turning creative ideas into income streams? How do you decide that it is time to try out a new endeavour?

So deciding on the live shows, it was from the audience. They said they really liked the online and digital content, but can we have a live event where we can come and mingle?

From interacting in the comment section, they feel like they are one family and thus will have things in common. After the first show, they asked again - **"Now that I've been to the show, can I go home with something? Maybe a souvenir?"**. And that was how we started selling merchandise.

The same way, they requested for longer videos and asked me to do a podcast. So I did. I started my first podcast with my business partner where we would discuss life and other stories I have from attending interviews.

The audience also requested I talk about those experiences separately in a second podcast, so we started another podcast which is really picking up. And this is what informs what we do on a daily basis.

Seems like you have a lot of interactions with your audience. Based on what you've shared, what does your revenue split look like across brands and audience engagement?

In percentage terms, **60% of revenue comes from corporates and brands while the other 40% comes from the audience.** I can charge brands a higher premium compared to audience members. This is largely due to what I'd describe as "subscription fatigue." For example, in markets like Kenya, audiences already pay for multiple entertainment services such as Netflix, Showmax, and DStv. Expecting them to also pay individual content creators directly becomes challenging, which means we must keep audience pricing low.

You have quite an entrepreneurial approach to your business. How do you structure operations behind all this?

I founded **Njugush Creatives** with my partner to be a company that manages creative businesses. It was founded on the understanding that a successful creative enterprise cannot be run single-handedly. You need a manager to handle emails, planning, and scheduling, as well as an accountant and production support. This insight led to the establishment of a structured agency model built around my personal brand as the core product.

The company functions as **a full-service creative agency** that manages all aspects of operations — from scheduling and production to client relations. The team currently comprises nine professionals, including an accountant, production lead, sound technician, manager, and administrative staff.

This structure allows for effective task segmentation and professional oversight. For instance, the team manages conflicts in schedules (e.g., determining when he can attend shoots or meetings) and ensures timely delivery of projects.

The in-house capacity also enables Njugush Creatives to independently manage its live events, handling logistics such as venue sourcing and event coordination without relying on external agencies.

I currently collaborate with my partner, with whom I began producing content. I occasionally work with other creators, although these collaborations remain informal due to the unpredictable nature of content monetization. **Many videos are not directly paid for,** which makes sustaining full-time creative teams challenging.

Long term, **the vision is to evolve Njugush Creatives into a fully-fledged agency** model that can represent and manage other creators. This would allow the company to provide scalable solutions to brands. For example, offering alternative talent options when budgets do not meet my personal rate, thereby expanding reach and impact across multiple creators.

Given how widespread your content is, and it travelling even wider via your website, what does content and IP production look like for you?

Do you have a strategy to protect your content, your characters or your brand from rip-offs?

Unfortunately, we still don't have a strong system for protecting intellectual property as creators in Kenya. Right now, if someone infringes on your content, the most you can do is go to a small claims court but that process is expensive and slow. You need a good lawyer, which costs money that many creators simply don't have. By the time you're done producing and distributing your content, there's often little left to fight legal battles.

The truth is, copyright enforcement is still very weak, especially in the digital space. Social media has made it easy for anyone to take your work, repost it with a watermark, and say they're "supporting" you. But that kind of support doesn't help. When people can watch my videos for free on someone else's YouTube channel, they won't come to my website to pay for it which directly affects my revenue.

I have personally experienced this. During one of my live shows, someone attended the entire event, recorded it from start to finish, and uploaded it online the next day. My team was still in post-production, preparing to upload the edited version to our website for paying viewers, but that effort became useless because the full show was already available for free. When we confronted the person, they said, "But I'm helping to promote you." It took a long conversation to make them understand that this kind of exposure actually hurts us.

So, at the moment, protection mostly depends on personal influence and reputation that is being able to demand that someone take down your content. But that's not sustainable or fair.

We need stronger copyright frameworks, better awareness among audiences, and proper enforcement from government agencies. The government still treats intellectual property like physical property, something you can touch, like land or a house, and that mindset needs to change. Creative work is valuable intellectual property, and until it's protected with the same seriousness, creators will continue to lose income and motivation.

Now that you have a company, how do you deal with taxation?

How do the tax laws affect creators in Kenya?

To be honest, the taxation framework for content creators in Kenya is still very unclear. The digital economy caught everyone by surprise, including the government, and now they are trying to catch up without fully understanding how it works.

Currently, **there's a 1% digital tax on income earned online.** For example, on my website, I pay 1% of my earnings. However, most of us have had to structure our businesses through registered companies because corporate clients require formal invoicing. When clients pay us through our companies, they withhold the applicable withholding tax at the source, which simplifies compliance to some degree. There's **a 5% withholding tax** on certain payments, but compliance is inconsistent because both creators and clients try to minimise deductions.

The reality, though, is that many creators still struggle with this process. Since brands rarely increase budgets to accommodate tax deductions, creators often receive less than agreed or turn to informal payments. Some prefer to be paid in cash after gigs to avoid paperwork, which creates a grey economy.

The current administration is aggressively seeking new tax revenues, but the approach often feels more punitive than enabling. There's also public mistrust — people feel that the taxes collected don't translate into tangible benefits, especially when news circulates about mismanagement or politically connected entities profiting from systems like e-Citizen.

Has the Kenyan Government done anything right to support creators? What can they do to boost the industry?

There's very little the government has done right in supporting creators or the broader creative economy. Agencies like the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) and the Music Copyright Society of Kenya (MCSK) exist, but their work hasn't been enabling.

The Kenya Film Classification Board **focuses more on censorship and moral policing than on supporting production.** They are quick to issue restrictions — telling you what words you can't use or what content can't air — but they don't provide the infrastructure we need, like designated public shooting spaces or simplified licensing. Most of the time, **they only appear when money is involved or to collect fees.**

The Music Copyright Society of Kenya, which is supposed to collect and distribute royalties, also fails to deliver meaningful returns to artists. **Some of Kenya's biggest musicians reportedly earn around $100 a month in royalties,** which is a lot less than they could be making. Overall, government involvement has leaned toward regulation and taxation rather than empowerment and facilitation.

There's a lot the government could do differently. First, instead of focusing on one-off cash rewards or publicity-driven gestures, they should **build long-term systems that nurture talent.** For example, when the President offers millions of shillings to football players after a win, it looks good in the moment, but it doesn't solve the root problem which is the lack of proper training facilities, funding structures, or talent academies.

We need **investment in foundational systems** such as creative academies, training hubs, and accessible production spaces, so that young people can develop their skills sustainably. The same principle applies across creative sectors. You can't expect good output if the environment for learning and production is poor.

Secondly, the government should **create an enabling environment** rather than handing out aid. Simplify licensing processes, protect creators from exploitation, and allow us to shoot or perform without unnecessary restrictions. **They can also offer tax incentives or reliefs** similar to what foreign investors receive that would stimulate growth and formalisation in the local creative economy.

Finally, they need to recognize and support grassroots efforts. For instance, one of Kenya's top footballers, Michael Olunga who plays professionally in the Middle East, runs a youth academy that has produced players now competing internationally. That's the kind of initiative the government should strengthen — not just reward success after the fact, but invest early in the systems that make success possible.

Speaking of enabling systems, you co-developed the CcHUB Creator Economy Incubator in Kenya.

What gaps in the ecosystem did you identify and intend to address through that programme?

CcHUB was setting up a Creator Economy Incubator in Kenya and needed a Lead Creator to co-develop and guide the programme. After a few discussions and interviews, I came on board to support that work.
The goal of the incubator was to address several key gaps in Kenya's creator ecosystem.

First, we noticed that content creation here is very unstructured compared to traditional media. Many creators come into the space with no background in media ethics, business management, or digital production. As a result, people post anything and only realise later that they've crossed ethical or legal lines. So, one major gap was knowledge and professionalism, and understanding how to create responsibly, brand yourself, and engage audiences sustainably.

Secondly, there's a skills and access gap, especially outside Nairobi. We wanted to prove that you don't have to be in the city to succeed as a creator. Someone in a rural area should be able to make money and participate in the digital economy while also promoting their community and culture.
Another focus area was gender norms. CcHUB's work strongly integrates gender inclusion, and that became the backbone of our second cohort. We wanted to challenge stereotypes in content creation, helping both men and women understand how representation and storytelling can either reinforce or reshape harmful narratives.

Lastly, we wanted to provide creators with the technical and business know-how to professionalize their craft. We covered things like how to plan productions, keep budgets lean, talk to clients, negotiate fair pay, and rate their work appropriately. Through this approach, we're building a generation of emerging content creators who are not only creative but also strategic – people who understand both the art and the business of content creation.

Lastly, what resources do you think that Kenyan creators still lack to grow sustainably?

I think one of the biggest gaps for Kenyan creators is skill, not just in producing content, but in learning how to make it sustainable. Many people are drawn to quick online trends or shock content that might get views for a short time, but it's not something you can build a lasting career on. You'll see a lot of creators using sensational videos to get traction, but that kind of content fades fast. The next day, someone else comes with a new trick, and your audience moves on.

So for me, **sustainability starts with training.** We need more spaces where creators can learn what actually works and **not rely on trial and error.** That's one of the things we're trying to address in our mentorship programs: teaching creators the fundamentals of storytelling, quality production, and audience retention.

The second big challenge is finances. A lot of creators have ideas but can't afford to execute them. Production costs, from hiring a camera person to renting equipment or lighting, can be high. If I have my own camera, for example, I can shoot whenever I want without worrying about paying for each session. But even the people behind the camera need skills too. Many of them are self-taught and help friends, but they lack training in lighting, sound, and editing.

"I think one of the biggest gaps for Kenyan creators is skill, not just in producing content, but in learning how to make it sustainable.

Many people are drawn to quick online trends or shock content that might get views for a short time, but it's not something you can build a lasting career on."

"I was lucky to study journalism, so I picked up filming and editing skills early on. I still edit most of my videos myself.

But for many creators, the lack of technical training limits how far their content can go, even when they have talent. That's why access to mentorship, studio spaces, and professional tools is so important."

For instance, some community studios now allow young creators to record podcasts or videos for free. They even edit on-site, so by the time you leave, your episode is ready to post. If we had more spaces like that, we'd see a lot more consistent, high-quality work.

Finally, there's also the issue of infrastructure. Sometimes we have to shoot in real locations — like a chemist shop or market — and we face unexpected challenges. You could get permission to film, shoot the whole thing, and then have the owner call the next day asking you to pull it down. That's time and money lost. Having dedicated creative studios and sets would help avoid those situations and allow creators to focus fully on their work.

So in summary, the key resources we're still lacking are skills, funding, and dedicated creative spaces. With those in place, I believe Kenyan creators can produce globally competitive content and build truly sustainable businesses.

Tosin Samuels (TSpices Kitchen): On Moving From Recipes to Revenue

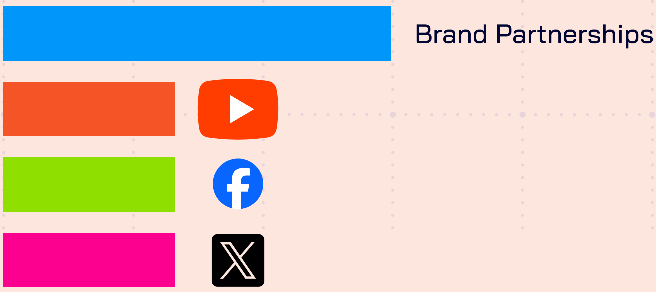
You began sharing recipes simply to learn how to cook, and now TSpices Kitchen is a thriving creative brand. What was the turning point that made you consider doing this full-time?

My real turning point came when people started reaching out to say how much my recipes had helped them. I got messages from women thanking me for saving their marriages, people telling me their cooking had improved, and countless tags of followers trying out my dishes. That feedback made me realize this was bigger than me.

Then came the shocker; earning from it! You mean people would actually pay me to do what I love? That feeling was indescribable. I did my research, decided to take it more seriously, and that's how it all began.

As someone earning revenue from food content, what are your most stable income streams, and in what percentages do they make up your total revenue?

Today, I earn from four major streams: YouTube ads, Facebook and Twitter content, brand deals, meal plan sales, and occasionally cooking shows or public speaking. YouTube remains my most consistent source of income because it pays monthly, even from old videos. Brand partnerships are also steady and together they make up about 60% of my earnings.



How has your income from content creation grown since you began till now?

Since I started, **my income has grown by over 50%.** I used to charge in thousands; now I charge in six figures.

The biggest shift came when I transitioned from photos to videos, improved my video skills, negotiated long-term deals, and started posting consistently, multiple times a day. That consistency brought more visibility, more brand offers, and steady growth.

You've collaborated with brands like UBA, Honeywell and Temu. What do you think brands look out for when working with creators?

What factors make these partnerships sustainable—or not—for creators in food content?

From my experience, brands look for authenticity, creativity, and results. If your style connects with their target audience and delivers exposure, they'll always come back.

What systems (like team, tools, official structures) have helped, or still challenge you in scaling and sustaining your content?

Of course, there have been challenges. Building the right team hasn't been easy, finding people who share the same values is tough. I once discovered a team member was stealing from me, which was painful. Still, having a team has helped me scale. Now I have a videographer, editor, a virtual secretary, and a kitchen assistant.

This structure has allowed me to treat my work as a business rather than just a hobby. Another challenge has been access to food ingredients, especially because of my location. But independent brands and recognition, like my recent award at the TikTok Awards Sub-Saharan Africa 2024, have kept me motivated and recognition by platforms like TikTok help take my brand beyond my region.

Nigerian creators are typically concentrated in major cities like Lagos, Abuja or Port Harcourt.

How do you think living in Lokoja has influenced your social media prominence and capacity to earn as a creator? Do you think that the benefits outweigh the costs?

Settling in Lokoja has been a mixed experience. On the positive side, it has kept me focused, reduced distractions, and lowered my cost of living. It also gave my brand a relatable, local touch since ingredients are more affordable and accessible. However, being away from Lagos has cost me big opportunities, many brands lose interest once they realize I'm not Lagos-based. At first, I felt discouraged, but I've come to embrace it. My faith is the foundation of my brand, and I believe God has a purpose for me here. Besides, with the internet and the right tools, I can reach the world from anywhere. And sometimes, brands even fly me out when needed.

In a recent conversation, you mentioned that you have grown your team from one assistant to four people. What milestones did you achieve that made you consider hiring a team?

One major milestone for me was being invited to host a cooking show on DSTV without any audition or prior experience. That moment made me realize this journey isn't just national but international, and it pushed me to level up.

In the beginning, I did everything alone, cooking, filming, editing, procurement, cleaning, you name it. Now with my team of four, the work is lighter, and I honestly wish I had scaled earlier.

Reflecting on your journey, what advice would you give to creators looking to go beyond hustle and build a formally structured creative business?

"My advice to other creators is simple: build structure early. It helps you create more content, grow faster, avoid burnout, and increase your income.

Don't treat content like a side hustle; treat it like a business."

What has been your biggest challenge in sustaining your creative brand over the years?

That said, challenges still exist, especially power supply in Nigeria. As a creator, it can be frustrating to plan content and lose hours of work because of electricity issues.

Sometimes I imagine how much easier things would be in countries with stable amenities, but I keep pushing regardless.

In five years, what does success look like for you?

Looking ahead, success for me in the next five years means owning a state-of-the-art food studio for shows and production, seeing my recipes everywhere in text, pictures, and videos, and empowering the next generation.

One dream close to my heart is to collaborate with tech companies to train teenagers in digital skills, especially kids from the street.

This passion came from volunteering at weekly street food drives, where I saw children with so much potential but limited opportunities. I want to change that.

If you had access to

$100,000

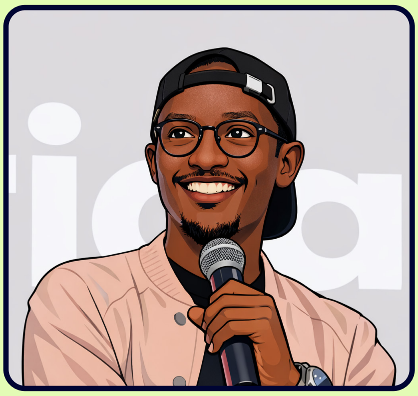
how would you deploy it to grow your brand and deepen your impact?

If I had $100,000 today, I'd build a fully functional food and content studio with the best equipment and stable power supply. I'd also set up an academy for budding creators to learn digital and culinary skills, and finally establish an initiative for underprivileged children to gain tech exposure.

Beyond that, I'd love to create a recipe app, publish cookbooks to preserve our culinary heritage, and build a business structure around kitchen appliances to create jobs and give back to society.

For me, food is more than recipes. It's a way to touch lives, preserve culture, and create impact.

Roy Kanyi: On Making Knowledge Entertaining



How did your journey begin as a tech educator and content creator? What inspired you to start simplifying gadgets and tech for your audience?

My name is Roy Kanyi. I'm a 27-year-old living in Kenya who studied Statistics but this is currently living life and making an income through content creation. I started out as an art boy who loves art. Behind the scenes, I'm also involved in theatre, and would call myself an actor. When TikTok started in 2019, just before COVID, a friend of mine posted a skit on TikTok and I was like, this skit looks a bit off, then I said "I think you should have done it like this" So I made a video to show him, how exactly it's supposed to be done.

At the time, I didn't know what "post" meant. So apparently I clicked 'post'. I thought it only went to my gallery. And when I came back, the video had about 10,000 views. Prior to that video, I just had two followers. That was crazy to me. That was the point where I actually thought about it and I was like "you can actually post content on TikTok and people enjoy and learn from it." It got to a point where I realised I could monetize this. I decided to make my content around something I'm passionate about.

And my passion, as much as I love art, acting and lip syncing, is technology. I found a gap in the technology space. I'm still the same boy looking for tech videos and I wasn't seeing any from a Kenyan point of view.This is an area I loved. Then I decided that it was what I wanted to do. What inspired me to start simplifying tech gadgets for my audience is that the tech industry is so full of jargon.

However, when I switched from skits and lip sync to tech, the "serious stuff", my views dipped. So I thought to myself, "How do I make this engaging and interesting?

Then I decided that instead of focusing on "the jargon" , let me just simplify this for the general audience, in a way that it can be understood by everyone. And luckily, people loved that. And that's how the journey has been so far.

Being named the only Kenyan on TikTok's 2025 Discover List under the Educators category is a huge achievement. How has this recognition influenced your work and goals?

Being recognized by TikTok for the 2025 Discover List was the moment I realized that simplifying tech content for my Kenyan audience had gained global recognition.

I'd seen from my statistics that I had audiences in Nigeria and Southern Africa, but the Discover List solidified it and pushed me to deepen my career. Now my focus goes beyond fun, engaging content. I approach it with impact and intention.

My goal is to create tech content that's easy to understand, timeless, and relevant to all age groups.

The recognition has also allowed me to be more professional and opened doors for me to work with bigger international brands like Google and Huawei. International players who are not only producing devices here in Kenya, but on the African scale. For example, despite Huawei's marketing restrictions in Kenya, they still reached out to me to highlight their other products, such as wearables.

This recognition has elevated both my work and opportunities, and I'm excited to continue educating and informing my audience on technology at a global scale.

What income streams support your work as a creator—brand partnerships, speaking engagements, platform revenue, etc.—and how reliable are they?

The main income streams that support my work as a creator are brand collaborations. That has been the biggest source of income and has allowed me to scale the business. With that income, I now have a management team that sources brand partnerships, and I've been able to employ two people.

They earn a percentage of the revenue we generate, so not only is the money coming in from partnerships, but it has also created employment. I've also brought on board someone who handles PR and communications, as well as editors again, made possible through brand income.

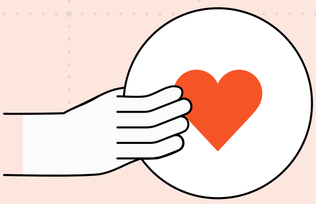
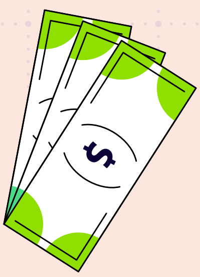
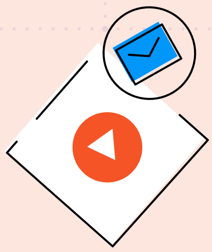
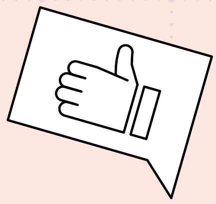
Another income stream is speaking engagements. For example, I recently attended an event hosted by Safaricom, the largest telecommunications network in Kenya. Opportunities like this put me on the map and generate income, whether directly or indirectly. Beyond payment, networking itself is a form of income.

Building relationships and connections often matters more than what's in your account, it's about the value of your network. TikTok also creates these opportunities by flying us out to meet other creators from different regions. Recently, we were in Cape Town and Johannesburg for the TikTok Creators Awards and the Safety Internet Summit. I consider those networking opportunities as part of my income streams.

Another income source is affiliate marketing. This has become my second-largest revenue generator. Because my niche is in tech, most of my content involves reviews. If someone likes a product I review, they are likely to purchase it through a referral link, and I earn a commission. That has proven to be very reliable.

There are also monetization features on TikTok, such as going LIVE, receiving gifts, or creating paywalled content through Subscription. I haven't fully tapped into the paywalled content yet, but it's something I have plans to explore, especially because my community often asks questions that I could leverage in that space.

So the first two are reliable. The third is something I am looking forward to experimenting and trying as we continue to grow.

How has your income from content creation grown since you began till now?

- When I look at how my income from content creation has grown, I'd describe it like a graph. The line keeps rising. Sometimes it plateaus briefly, but that's when I take breaks, reorganize, and restrategize. Then it continues upward. I'm a statistics student, so I tend to explain things with graphs, but that's really how it feels. The growth has been steady, and it hasn't slowed down.

- When I first started, my very first brand partnership paid me just KES 500 ($3.87). At the time, that was enough for me. Since then, things have changed significantly. Today, production quality has improved, I've brought in a team, and I've landed campaigns where I've earned a decent amount, some worth north of $2,000 or $3,000. In fact, one campaign paid me $4,000, the highest so far. That was a peak, not my average, but it shows how far things have come.

- The growth has been influenced by several factors: platforms, algorithms, brand deals, and most importantly, new skills and collaborations. **When I started making tech content, my views dropped drastically from 90,000 or 100,000 views on skits to as low as 200 views. It wasn't the algorithm's fault; the content was simply full of jargon. Once I learned how to simplify tech and make it engaging, the views started climbing again. To me, the algorithm reflects audience interest: if people don't connect with your video, they won't watch, no matter how much it's pushed to them.**

- As my content improved, so did the brand deals. Along the way, I've picked up crucial skills, storytelling, video editing, scripting, color grading, even how to present myself on camera. Those skills opened doors beyond social media. For example, I landed a role at Standard Group, one of the biggest media houses in East Africa, hosting a Gen Z show called What's Trending on KTN every Wednesday. It was a non-scripted show where I broke down social media trends in real time, and I could do it confidently because of the practice I got from content creation.

- So, my growth has been consistent and exciting. From brand deals to campaigns in the thousands, from low views to global recognition, every step has been built on the last. It shows how small efforts add up, and how skills from one space can open opportunities in another.

When I shifted from skits to jargon-heavy tech content, my views dropped sharply, but once I learned to simplify and make tech engaging, they began to rise again—proving that the algorithm simply reflects audience interest.

What systems (like team, tools, official structures) have helped—or still challenge—you in scaling and sustaining your content?

When brand deals started coming in, I thought I could handle everything, editing, scripting, color grading. As a creative, you feel like you can do it all. And honestly, I could. But trying to be an octopus led to burnout, fatigue, and stress. Delegating was the shift. Once I handed video editing to someone specialized, the work became faster and better.

When the TikTok Discover List was launched in early 2025, I knew I needed more structure. A friend who had been bringing me brand deals stepped in to manage things, and that's when I really started treating it as a business. Now I have a management team handling contracts and income, plus two editors. For example, if I'm at a Safaricom event, I focus on creating quick posts while my editor captures the behind-the-scenes and longer footage.

Beyond the team, having proper systems, protocols, contracts, workflows has made the process smoother. The challenge is still mental health. Scaling can get overwhelming, and I've seen many creators lose themselves when they don't take the business side seriously.

Have you ever considered or received institutional funding for your creator activities? If so, what was that process like?

I've never received institutional funding for my creative work, though it's something I look forward to. The closest has been fully funded trips by companies, which I do count as a form of support.

Those opportunities have allowed me to travel, experience technology in new environments, and understand different audiences outside Africa. They've pushed me to think outside the box. But in terms of direct institutional funding, I haven't received that yet.

What funding type(s) do you think are suitable for creators in Kenya?

To be honest, I might not know the exact terminology, but let me put it plainly. Sometimes you just feel, “If I had five million shillings, I’d do X, Y, Z, and grow my content, then reinvest to pay it back.” Whatever that funding type is called, that’s what I think creators here need.

For me, the biggest challenge has always been production. I’m still working on setting up a plug-and-play studio where I can just place the product, shoot, and keep things natural and authentic. Most creators I know struggle with this too. People often assume my management handles production, but they only take care of the financial side.

When production isn’t sorted, the setup cameras, lights, mics drains your energy before you even start creating. By the time you hit record, you’re already exhausted. But if creators had access to funding that covered production and also had a clear way to reinvest and return the money, I believe many more would thrive.

In your view, are creators in Africa considered “investment-ready”? What would it take for them to get there?

I’d say creators in Africa are growing toward being investment ready, but we’re not fully there yet. Even those who look like they’ve made it are still figuring things out.

What it takes is intentionality. If you’re on social media and platforms like TikTok for fun, that’s fine. But if you’re there to earn, you need to deliberately collaborate, pitch, travel, put yourself out there. That intentional approach is what moves creators closer to being ready for investment.

The challenge is opportunity and finances. Talent, ideas, and ambition are everywhere. You hear it when you talk to creators on the ground. But without financial support and strong structures around them, many can’t take the next step. That’s the gap we need to close.

What has been your biggest challenge in sustaining your creative brand over the years—funding, time, burnout, technical limitations, or something else?

For me, the biggest challenge is mental burnout, which comes with being a creative. Then there's funding. Tech isn't cheap, and I often have to buy products with my own money. That's a major barrier for many tech creators. If you look closely, you'll see the field doesn't have that many people in it, and the cost is a big reason why.

Sometimes I even share my devices with upcoming creators. For example, if I review a new folding phone, I might pass it on to another creator in Nairobi so they can also create content and grow. That's how we build community.
So yes, funding is a big one and burnout too. Time, not so much. I quit my full-time job to focus fully on content creation. And I have plans to scale up.

In five years, what does success look like for you?

In five years, Roy Kanyi will be a household name in technology. I see myself as the go-to person showcasing how I live, how I integrate tech into everyday life, and doing it as the genuine, happy, bubbly person I am. That personality is what I'm building my business on, and by then it will have fully become a brand.

Right now, I have four employees, but I believe we'll scale further. It won't just be video content, we'll expand into publications, tech articles, and more. In fact, I've already started a website called **Tech Kenya Africa.** It's still early, but I know it will grow into something big. The name has layers: in Swahili, tekenya means to tickle or make someone laugh, but it also carries **"Tech Kenya"—technology from Kenya, for Africa.** That mix of fun and tech is exactly the spirit I want the platform to carry.

Five years from now, I see myself traveling the world, telling stories of how technology is used across different regions—even beyond Earth, because technology is literally taking us there. That's how big I'm dreaming.

The future is bright. Technology never plateaus. Every day, something new is coming. And I plan to be right at the heart of it.

If you had access to $100,000, how would you deploy it to grow your brand and deepen your impact?

If I had access to $100,000, **I'd take my work to the grassroots.** I've simplified tech content on social media, but I want to push it further, making sure people at the grassroots level also access and benefit from it. That's exactly where I'd channel the funds.

Amr El Hady: Dentist, Creator, Restaurateur

You juggle a demanding career as a dentist with being one of the leading food creators in MENA. How do you manage your time and energy while balancing clinical responsibilities with content creation?

Balancing a full-time career in dentistry with being a content creator was definitely challenging at first. But content creation has always been my passion even as a kid, my brother and I used to make fun videos together just to share with friends.

When I started creating professionally, I treated weekends as my dedicated time for filming, instead of going out to the cinema or hanging out with friends. I would batch-shoot my content, edit, and schedule everything for the week ahead.

At the beginning it felt more like a hobby than an extra job, so it didn't overwhelm me. As my platform grew, I built a team to help manage the workflow during the week, while I still focus on filming during weekends. This system keeps me consistent and allows me to balance both careers.

Your content spans quick, relatable food reviews and creative culinary experiments.

How do you decide what resonates most with your diverse audience, ensuring you do not sacrifice authenticity with engagement?

From the very beginning, my main strategy has always been to stay authentic and original. I never wanted my content to look like anyone else's, so I invested a lot of effort in researching unique places that weren't overexposed, especially in Egypt at the start. I made sure to present them in my own personality and style, so the audience could feel I was genuine and trustworthy, and when they tried the places themselves, they enjoyed the experience.

As my platform grew, I built a research team that scouts new spots daily and even conducts mystery shopping to ensure quality before we feature them.

On top of that, I developed multiple content series targeting different audiences, from fine dining and supporting local brands, to supermarket finds, authentic Egyptian food, and full food vlogs. That mix keeps my content authentic, fresh, and relevant to a diverse audience.

You also co-founded Sushimi by K, blending content creation with entrepreneurship. What led you to establish a food brand, and how has that enhanced or complicated your revenue streams?

Launching my own restaurant while being a food creator definitely came with challenges and potential conflicts. I knew people would question how I could promote other restaurants while also owning one, so the pressure was on to make sure my place was absolutely perfect. My partners and I focused on creating a sushi experience in Egypt that simply didn't exist before.

For example, we were among the first to use fresh salmon and tuna instead of frozen, even though that required much more complex handling. We paired that with a strong focus on hospitality, and instead of relying on mass marketing, we built our growth through organic reach and word-of-mouth. It was a slower strategy, but it matched our fine dining positioning. Five years later, we now operate almost three branches, with full reservations both on weekdays and weekends, and often a waiting list seven days a week.

How do you advise creators to think about financial sustainability for their careers? What pathways do you think make the most sense for creators?

Content creation is a career with a high risk factor. It's not like a traditional job where you know exactly how much you'll earn at the end of the month. But I believe that "no risk, no fun." If you focus on creating high-quality, consistent content across platforms, the monetized platforms will generate revenue, and the others will build strong reach that attracts sponsors.

The key is not to focus only on quick money, but to build a loyal community and establish yourself in a clear niche. For me, that niche was food, which gave me credibility and recognition. Over time, I started attracting sponsors, then positioned myself for bigger clients, moving from Egypt to the wider MENA region, and eventually to international brands.

Today, my income streams are diverse: monetization payouts, sponsorships, and even spin-off businesses like my agency that consults F&B brands on content and strategy. Financial stability in content creation comes from diversification, patience, and having a clear long-term strategy.

Have you ever considered or received institutional funding for your creator activities? If so, what was that process like?

To be honest, I've never received or even seriously considered institutional funding for my content creation. When I first started, it wasn't about money at all, it was purely a hobby and a passion.

Later, as it grew into a career, I was able to reinvest the income I generated back into building a team of editors, videographers, a research team, and even a PR manager. From there, I also invested in ventures like my restaurant and now I'm considering other projects. So far, all of this has been funded organically from my own revenue. I'm not against the idea of external funding, but it's simply not something I've needed or focused on yet.

What funding type(s) do you think are suitable for creators in Egypt?

I believe the most valuable type of funding for creators in Egypt would be support directed towards production and team building. Many creators struggle with the high costs of producing quality content, whether it's investing in professional equipment, cameras, or covering travel expenses for creators whose work is tied to exploring new places.

In addition, having access to a skilled team can make a big difference in scaling up the quality and consistency of their content. So, funding that provides resources for production and skilled collaborators would be the most suitable and impactful.

In five years, what does success look like for you?

After five years, the feeling of success is truly priceless. For me, it has never been only about money or fame, it's the sense of fulfillment. I've always been a competitive person who wants to do things properly, so I believed I could be good at content creation, but I never imagined the scale of recognition I'd achieve.

Winning awards like TikTok MENA Food Creator of the Year in 2022, ranking in the TikTok Discover Top 50 list in 2025, and receiving invitations to festivals are all honors I never thought I would reach. But what touches me the most is the everyday impact: people stopping me in the street to say they trust me, or seeing a local brand grow from struggling to expanding branches after I featured them, or being part of charitable causes that make a difference.

Content creation gives me a kind of personal euphoria that dentistry, as rewarding as it is, could never match because here, every video can reach millions of people and create real change. That's a feeling I can't put a price on.

If you had access to

$100,000

how would you deploy it to grow your brand and deepen your impact?

If I had $100,000, I honestly wouldn't spend it directly on content creation. I've always believed that success in content doesn't come from equipment or funding, but from creativity, authenticity, and personality. Even today, I still film all my videos on my phone, despite having access to the biggest production houses, videographers, and directors in Egypt.

What matters most is the idea, the energy, and the storytelling and that's what audiences and even international brands connect with. No one has ever told me my content needs better gear, because the creative execution speaks louder than equipment. **If I were to use such funding, I would invest it in scaling my company and expanding my team, or channel it into my restaurant business.** But for content itself, I don't believe I need external funding, just creativity and consistency.

Charity Ekezie: On Breaking Stereotypes and Reaching International Audiences

You began your journey in journalism and radio before turning to content creation during the COVID lockdown. How did early struggles—both personal and financial—shape your approach to creativity and storytelling?

I actually started out in journalism and radio, and even before lockdown I was creating content on other platforms. But the truth is, nobody really cared. I felt like my message wasn't landing, and I was struggling both creatively and with my mental health. I was going through so much at the time, and content creation was supposed to be an escape, but instead it felt like another wall I couldn't break through.

I've always known I'm multi-talented and outspoken, I've always wanted to express myself in different ways. But the other platforms demanded perfection. Everything had to be polished and prim, which didn't leave space for authenticity. That changed when I joined TikTok during the COVID lockdown. On TikTok, it wasn't about perfection, it was about being yourself. That shift gave me permission to show up authentically, to let people see me as I am, and for the first time, people actually embraced it.

TikTok also gave me an escape. I was depressed for a while, but every time I opened the app, there was always a video that made me laugh or forget what I was going through. That mattered. It wasn't just a platform, it was a form of relief.

And there's another layer to it. As a journalist, I was often told my voice wasn't "good enough" because it didn't sound foreign. There's this idea here that you need a certain kind of accent to succeed in radio. But on TikTok, people celebrated my voice. I got comments like, "Your voice is amazing," and that was healing for me. It helped me find confidence in my own sound, build my storytelling skills, and, more importantly, build myself.

What income streams support your work as a creator?

In terms of monetization, on TikTok, I know creators can earn using LIVE where their community rewards them. Sometimes I get brand partnerships, especially partnerships that involve social impact, non-NGOs, and I also get regular brand partnerships. I've gotten a couple of speaking engagements. I would say mostly my money comes from brand partnerships. They don't come all the time, they come maybe once in three months, maybe once in six months. But when they do, it's something that I'm excited to do. The platform allows me to share my message and allows people to see me for who I am all over the world.

Also, I believe with time, money will come from different sources. Sometimes I make money off the TikTok LIVE stream, if I go on live and my community decides to reward me with some gifts. Those are the only ways I make money as a creator on TikTok. It's mostly really brand partnerships. Speaking engagements have helped me travel a lot. My visibility on this platform has actually helped me travel to as many countries as I can count, to be able to do some work related to my content. So that's a win.

What systems (like team, tools, official structures) have helped—or still challenge—you in scaling and sustaining your content?

For the systems that have helped me or still challenged me in scaling and sustaining my content, I think it's just consistently posting. I don't have any special tools. I think it's just consistently posting and always posting what my followers need. **I think the biggest thing for me is just to always listen to my followers to know exactly what they ask of me** and to know exactly what they want me to post. Sometimes I get a lot of comments under my post and I always use these comments to create new content. Also, I save a lot of things in my drafts. There are some times I create content and I'm not really feeling like it. I save them in my drafts. So my drafts have also been helpful. I can just see random stuff, or think of random stuff and just create content and just store them there until I'm ready or I feel like it's time to post them. And then if I don't feel like they need to post them, I still leave them there until I make up my mind to decide to post or not to post. So the drafts tool has actually been really helpful for me as well. It lets me create as much content as I want, different styles, different formats, and then I decide if it's something I want to go ahead and post and then I'll go ahead and post it. The algorithm tool has been a little bit helpful. Sometimes it pushes your content to the right audience, and to the people who actually do need it the most. So that's also been something I would say that has really helped me.

How do you balance the dual roles of activist and creator when choosing partnerships or sponsorships? What criteria do you use to ensure they align with your values?

Okay, so first thing first, anytime someone sends me anything for sponsorship or partnership, I always ask them exactly what they want me to do. Like, if it's an ad, tell me what am I advertising? Because I already have my own rules on things that I don't advertise, no matter what, no matter how much you pay me, I'm not going to put myself out there and advertise something that is not of value to me, doesn't add value to my followers or even improve my brand or even give my brand a general overall good look. So I'm very, very picky about people who I work with. And I think that's also one of the biggest reasons why I would say my finances aren't as big as probably other creators.
I'm not going to speak for other creators, but I do not accept just any brand deal just for accepting. It has to align with my goals, my brand, my brand messaging and it also has to align with my values as a person. And also one thing I always do before I accept brand deals or sponsorships is think about my followers. The first thing I do is think about how they would feel if they saw this. I am someone who is always more concerned about my followers than even myself and what I want, because I always want to make sure that the images that are put out there of me and of whatever I'm representing is the right image and it pushes the right message that represents me.

Have you ever considered or received institutional funding for your creator activities? If so, what was that process like?

I have never received any institutional funding for my creator activities. I don't know what it's like. Unless, if counting being one of the creators for the TikTok Changemaker programme in 2024 where I got an opportunity to travel with TikTok to major events such as the World Economic Forum counts as institutional funding for creator activities, then okay, maybe that.

As a TikTok Change Maker, this was a CSR programme where the funding was sent to the NGO I partnered with. But the money went directly to a charity organisation that I supported.

However, part of the programme, TikTok did pay creators for the campaign, where we got to make educational content driving the use of TikTok for Good in society. TikTok generally pays creators for campaigns that we participate in, with them.

In your view, are creators in Nigeria "investment-ready"? What would it take for them to get there?

I think we are investment ready. Like I said, we start a lot of trends, for example lets use TikTok. We already do so much. A lot of African Nigerian creators are already known globally. Someone like me, for example, I'm not even saying this to toot my horn, but I am celebrated. I'm known in a lot of countries, even outside Nigeria. I'm not even celebrated in Nigeria, the way I'm celebrated in the US and in the UK. We are already doing the most. I know that not every content out there is like the best content in the world, but the fact that we are really involved in not just creating content just for fun, but most of us are actually educating, entertaining, and even just being ourselves on the platform.
I know for sure that there will definitely be a way figured out. I mean there are Nigerian creators who have millions of followers, almost 20 million, if not up to 20 million followers and they create content that hits at least not less than 1 million views in a very short space of time. I feel like these people need to be rewarded at least, no matter how little, for the hard work they put to not just grow the platform, but to attract a lot of people on the platform. So I think we are investment ready.

With your audience largely international, how do you think this affects the range of brand collaborations available to you?

With my audience being largely international, it definitely affects the range of brand collaboration I have available because I do not really get a lot of Nigerian brands to collaborate with. Sometimes I do get contacted by Nigerian brands, but unfortunately, my following are mostly foreign.

So I let them know that if this is something that doesn't interest the international audience, then it will not work because my biggest market is not the Nigerian audience, but the international audience. And I wouldn't want a situation where I run an ad for a brand and the brand realises that it was a failure because I did not hit the target audience.

So I do not take brand deals that don't really have any international part to it. So if the brand target is the international market, then we can work.
But if they are not, unfortunately, I do not take those brand deals. It has made me lose a lot of brand deals that probably would have worked for me.

But at the end of the day, it also still opened me up to international brands. I get messaged and reached out to by multi-international brands who want me to do an ad for them or collaborate with them in a post because I have a large following in the US, UK, Philippines, Germany, Canada.

What has been your biggest challenge in sustaining your creative brand over the years?

My biggest challenge in sustaining my creative brand over the years is funding, time, technical limitations. There's so much, especially funding. There are so many things I usually would want to do because, as a content creator who educates people about Africa, my biggest dream has been to travel across Africa and show people Africa in real time.

I generate enough income to take care of my needs, but not enough to sponsor my travel all over the world. So unfortunately that dream has been a bit on pause, but when I get invited for events outside my country, it helps me to be able to still fulfil that dream, no matter how little . Also, I get burnt out, especially mental blocks. Sometimes I just have a huge mental block and it affects my posting and whatever I do. And I do not feel confident in myself enough to even post content then because it's like, what am I going to do next? What have my followers not seen? What can I redo? How can I restart? How do I try again? And it's just crazy. And then technical limitations, we are so far so good. I have been able to get anything that I need for what I do, because I do not create very extensive content. I do something really light and light hearted.

Technically speaking, everything else I want in terms of technology, in terms of my phone, laptop, ring light, those ones are actually good. Editing, I have to edit by myself. So I have easy editing apps to use. Those things have not really been a problem. The biggest problems have been mental blocks, funding, and time.
Time has not really been as bad because as a full time content creator, this is all I do for a living. So I have enough time to invest in my content.

With your creative evolution in mind, what do you hope the next phase of your brand looks like—across platforms, geographies, or even into other business ventures?

The biggest thing for me, to be honest, is to travel across Africa and bring Africa to the world. It has always been my biggest dream. I've always wanted to do that.

Not because I love travelling, but because it's part of what I'm trying to educate people about. So yes, definitely travelling to different parts of Africa, making vlogs and videos and just educating people about Africa, going to see the culture and teach people about the culture, not the negativity they keep seeing online.

That would actually be my biggest dream. Another thing I've always wanted to evolve into is having my own show on TV that educates people about Africa. That's the biggest thing I am looking forward to.

"The biggest thing for me, to be honest, is to travel across Africa and bring Africa to the world. It has always been my biggest dream.
I've always wanted to do that. Not because I love travelling, but because it's part of what I'm trying to educate people about."

Fanuel Masamaki: On Comedy, Capital, and the Beige Blazer

You're widely known for your signature beige blazer and comedic take on football content. Can you walk us through how that visual branding took shape and why it resonates deeply with your audience?

Actually, it was not easy to come up with this identity and type of content I make today; I started as a usual comedian like you get an idea, you act it out and post it online. I made several content pieces but the results were very frustrating sometimes (no likes, no comments). I was in a trial and error phase, then one day I decided to try football content blending with comedy, and suddenly the engagement was higher than expected. This is when I realised that I should stick with sports content, which was easy for me since I have football skills and when I fused with Ronaldo's celebration and commentary is when I went viral.

How has your income from content creation changed since you began till now?

Honestly, looking back from where I was compared to now, there are changes; of course, the TikTok algorithm is truly the best. Before I was financially dependent, but now I can move things all by myself. Though I haven't reached satisfaction (if that is the proper word to use), I'm thankful there's an increase of about 40%. All thanks to brand deals and collaborations that came our way.

Many African creators still struggle to translate views into income. What income streams have been most reliable for you—and what gaps persist in the Tanzanian ecosystem?

I normally depend on sponsorships and brand deals; only recently have I tried going LIVE, and we are getting a few gifts, though we are still trying to create a strong audience. Well, in Tanzania we also face challenges in the way companies perceive creators; only a few companies and brands are open to working with creators, and payment is minimal compared to the value added.

Companies still rely on traditional media and advertising as a means to reach their audience. As for creators like me and the type of content we make, which is action based content, with limited talking, which, as a result, needs a marketing manager, few board meetings to get approval into dealing with us since the majority use creators/influencers that make content with less action but talking.

African creators face low platform monetization and delayed feature roll-outs. Have you had to innovate or adapt to manage these inconsistencies—perhaps through cross-platform work, merch, or direct fan support?

First, I wish the views monetization to be a little hastened and other features as well. It is very hard to adapt, since the majority of features are not available in my region. You find yourself in a situation where you only wait for brand deals. The TikTok team puts forward for brands to work with us, and we hope they can continue encouraging brands to consider working with more content creators across the continent as they continue evolving their monetisation offerings.

As your following expands, how have you restructured your creator practice (team, tools, workflows) to keep pace with audience growth and quality demands?)

Yes, audience growth is escalating very fast. I tend to work more than usual; few breaks and lots of self-evaluation and analysis to meet audience demand. I recruited a team with competent individuals for each position, that is to say the cast, creative, and graphics people. Moreover, the creativity part is very essential since we have captured a lot of content, we need to continuously come up with something new every day that can bring more followers and retain the ones we already have.

What are the biggest operational challenges you face now—content production, logistics, finances, partnerships, or something else entirely?

To be precise, it is all about finances; sometimes the creativity is limited due to resources we have. For example, going somewhere else, maybe another country, to give your creative content new environment scenes, some contents require costumes, tools that fit the scenery and also production equipment and things like that.

Have you ever considered or received institutional funding for your creator activities? If so, what was that process like?

We have thought about it, but we haven't found any institutions that are ready to fund. It would be very helpful if we could engage the right stakeholders at these institutions who are willing to fund creators like ourselves.

What funding type(s) do you think are suitable for creators in Tanzania?

Apart from monetary support that can assist creators in logistics and daily expenses, getting support in linking to organisations and campaigns is very great. Also, up-to-date production equipment can also be a good start.

In your view, are creators in Tanzania "investment-ready"? What would it take for them to get there?

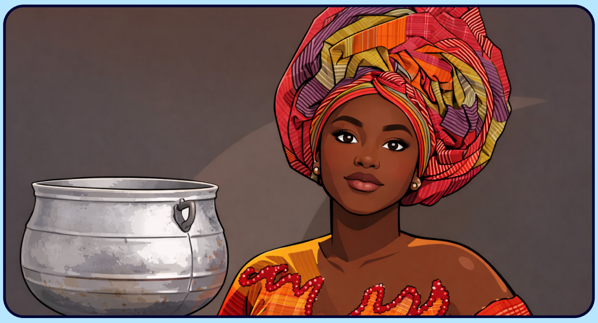
I believe that Tanzanian creators are prepared for investment as they have improved their content's creativity and quality. A language barrier can be described as a problem, but there is a huge Swahili-speaking community that's a huge market full of potential, and the likes of creators like me, and some other creators that have managed to break that barrier. So, in my opinion, we're investment ready.

"A language barrier can be described as a problem, but there is a huge Swahili-speaking community that's a huge market full of potential, and the likes of creators like me, and some other creators that have managed to break that barrier. So, in my opinion, we're investment ready."

With your creative evolution in mind, what do you hope the next phase of your brand looks like—across platforms, geographies, or even into other business ventures?

One thing for sure, we content creators have peak and low times, so with that in mind the vision is to be a global brand. I wish someday to get into business, maybe owning a brand that can ensure sustainability for me and my team. Being from humble families, we ought to set a good example and motivate others to follow us, so we can serve as a symbol of inspiration for young people, our community and the country at large.

Abena Amoakoaa Sintim-Aboagye: On Taking Ghanaian Food and Content Global



You've described yourself as an "African Food Tourist". How did you start out creating food content and what inspired the tag?

I started by sharing Ghanaian recipes, but soon realized Africa's pantry is so much bigger. The tag "African Food Tourist" comes from my love of traveling through food, using dishes and ingredients to explore cultures and tell Africa's story.

As the first Ghanaian included in TIME's 100 Most Influential Creators and part of TikTok's Global Discover List, how has global visibility affected the way you approach content creation and brand strategy?

Global visibility has pushed me to be more intentional with my content and brand. I know I'm not just representing myself, but Ghana and Africa as a whole. It's challenged me to think bigger, create bolder, and design a brand strategy that balances authenticity with global appeal. TikTok's team has also been deliberately putting my name out there.

You also represented Ghana at Cannes Lions 2025 with TikTok—participating in panels and meet-and-greets. What did that global platform teach you about your role as a cultural ambassador?

Cannes Lions taught me that being a cultural ambassador goes beyond showcasing food, it's about carrying my people's stories with pride. I realized the world is eager to learn about Africa, and my role is to make our culture accessible, relatable, and inspiring on a global stage.

I also got to meet the CEO of TikTok, giving me the opportunity to share direct views with him, coming from African creators and some of the ambitions we have.

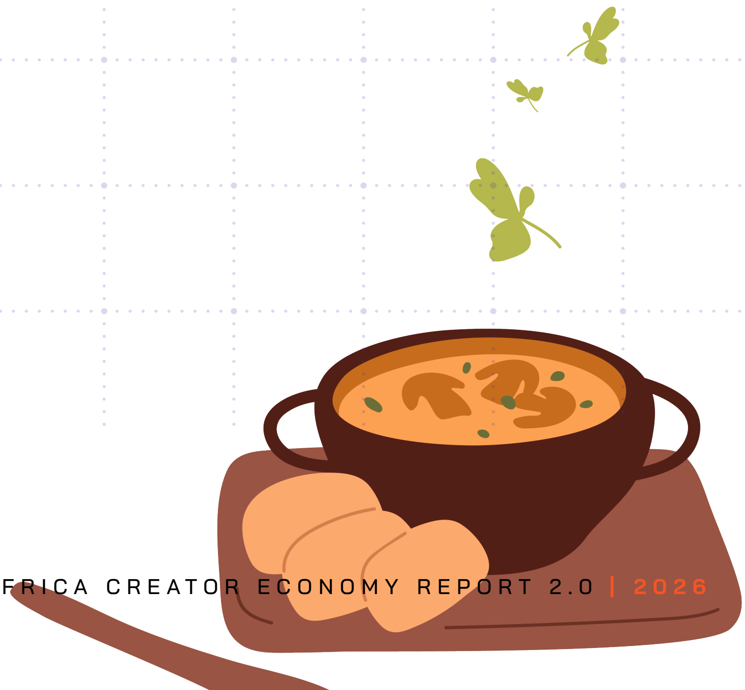
How has your income from content creation grown since you began till now?

When I started, content creation wasn't even about income, it was passion. Over time, as my platform and visibility grew, so did the opportunities. My income has increased by 300% since I began.

Today, I've moved from creating content for fun to building a sustainable career, working with global brands, running classes, and turning my creativity into real income streams.

The growth has been influenced by a mix of things. Brand deals definitely played a big role as companies started paying more attention to creators. Learning new skills especially in storytelling and video production helped me raise my content quality.

Collaborations also opened me up to new audiences. And of course, platform algorithms matter, but I've learned that consistency and authenticity are what keep people coming back.



You were recently named Brand Ambassador for Kivo, aligning with your advocacy for natural, healthy African cuisine. How do you evaluate brand partnerships that stay true to your vision?

For me, brand partnerships must align with my values and the story I want to tell. I always ask: Does this brand reflect African authenticity, promote health, and add value to my audience? If the answer is yes, then it's a natural fit. With Kivo, it was easy because they share my passion for natural, wholesome African food. Not only do they share my passion for natural, wholesome African food, but I genuinely love Kivo myself.

How do you advise creatives to structure their ambassadorial deals for maximum value? How does the compensation structure for creatives change as their audience grows?

I always encourage creatives to see ambassador deals and other deals as partnerships, not just one-time transactions. In the beginning, flat fees and product deals may be common, but as your audience and influence grow, you should negotiate beyond that, think performance-based bonuses, post-licensing for your content, and exclusivity fees. The value of your work rises with your reach and impact, so your compensation structure should evolve too. It's important to build packages that reflect not only your numbers but also your creativity, storytelling, and cultural influence.

"I always encourage creatives to see ambassador deals and other deals as partnerships, not just one-time transactions. In the beginning, flat fees and product deals may be common, but as your audience and influence grow, you should negotiate beyond that, think performance-based bonuses, post-licensing for your content, and exclusivity fees."

Beyond brand deals, what creative or sustainable income streams are central to your work right now? What strategies have you prioritized for long-term stability?

Beyond brand deals, I have also created my own platforms for value. This includes my cooking and tourism class platform, ChefAbbys School of Food, developing recipe books, and launching my upcoming African Pantry Challenge show on television, which is a competition-style food show.

For long-term stability, I focus on diversification, making sure I'm not dependent on just one source and building assets that can grow and sustain themselves even when I'm not actively posting.

What systems (like team, tools, official structures) have helped—or still challenge—you in scaling and sustaining your content?

One of the biggest shifts for me was realizing I couldn't do everything alone. Building a small but reliable team has been key, people who help with production, management, and coordination.

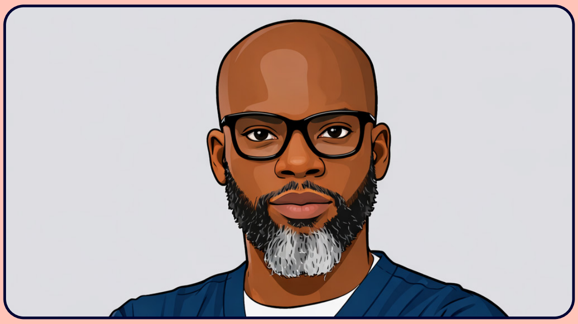
On the tools side, apps like CapCut and Splice make editing faster and more creative, while scheduling and analytics platforms keep me consistent.

In five years, what does success look like for you?

In five years, success for me looks like building a global platform where African food is celebrated on the same stage as any other cuisine. I see myself expanding the ChefAbbys School of Food, scaling the African Pantry Challenge into an international show, publishing more recipe books, and creating spaces where African food tourism thrives.

Most importantly, it's about impact, empowering more people to see the value in our culture and passing that pride on to the next generation.

Dr Renner: How a Nigerian Paediatrician is Building a Thriving Niche Health-Ed Ecosystem via Content Creation

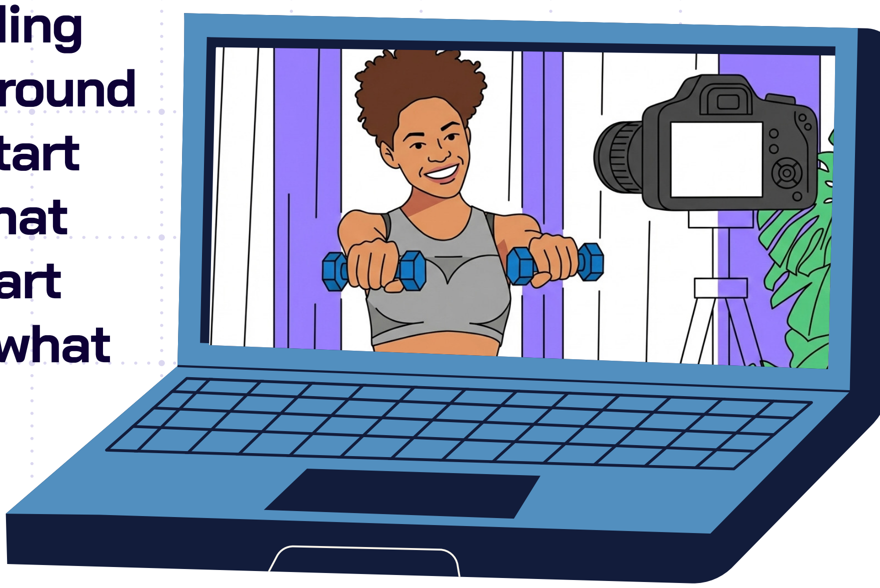


You're a paediatrician, a content creator, and a founder. Before we dive in, can you walk us through what you do and how all these roles connect?

Primarily, I'm a paediatrician. That's my 9 to 5, seeing patients, teaching other doctors, handling hospital administrative work, and managing other side roles. On top of that, I've created health-education content since 2017. My focus has been educating parents and caregivers on child health, preventive care, and holistic wellness. I also incorporate lifestyle content, like cooking, because it's something I enjoy.

Beyond content, I co-founded Agnosis Care on Demand, a health-tech company offering home and school vaccinations for busy parents. I also run "Communities," a platform that connects physicians to patients, allowing them to ask questions, book appointments, and get AI-assisted answers. And I founded The Baby Convention, an event and platform that brings together experts, parents, vendors, and creators of children's products to learn, connect, and exchange ideas.

That's incredible, building an entire ecosystem around your expertise. Let's start from the beginning. What first inspired you to start creating content, and what spurred your growth?



It started with a simple breastfeeding question from a lawyer. She asked whether she could give her baby water while exclusively breastfeeding. She's highly educated, so her uncertainty told me thousands of mothers were likely confused about the same things. There are so many conflicting opinions around childcare. Every neighbour has advice. I realised parents needed an expert voice sharing evidence-based information based on global standards.

When I began posting straightforward health tips like reminding mothers that babies don't need water in the first six months, I saw how much it resonated. Then I noticed that humorous content got more traction on Instagram. So I started blending humour into my education using trending audio, relatable scenarios, and funny skits inspired by everyday parenting moments. Mothers found it deeply relatable, and that helped the content travel farther.

At what point did you realise this could become more than a hobby, something with real earning potential?

There wasn't a dramatic "apple-on-the-head" moment. It was very gradual. My first brand collaboration came around 2018 or 2019 from a reproductive health company. They offered a fee to promote their package.

At the time, I didn't think doctors could do brand partnerships because we're trained to be conservative and remain ethical. But once I understood that I could collaborate with brands that align with my values, it opened my eyes to monetisation possibilities. More opportunities followed, some short campaigns, and some multi-month engagements.

How has your creator income changed since 2017? What factors have influenced that growth?

My income has grown significantly, especially as my followership increased. When I got my first brand deal, I had just over 5,000 followers. Today, I have about 172,000. That visibility affects the premium I can charge for endorsements. Between 2023 and 2035, my creator income has roughly doubled. Even with economic challenges, brands in fast-moving consumer goods still need to reach families. Parents prioritise essential products, so partnerships remain strong.

But brand rates aren't one-size-fits-all. I won't ask a non-governmental organisation operating in rural communities for the same amount I'd ask a multinational. Also, rate cards can be tricky because work scope varies.

Speaking of monetisation, what are your strongest income streams as a creator today?

Right now, brands remain my strongest income stream. I'm working on diversifying like publishing a book for new mothers and offering more courses. I've done courses in the past, like one on introducing semi-solids to babies in 2021, which did very well.

Social media platforms themselves also offer income opportunities, though I haven't fully leveraged them because of other personal projects. But within the digital ecosystem, brands provide the most substantial and sometimes surprising earnings especially during campaigns or special appearances.

My niche, childcare and paediatrics, is very specific. That limits reach but creates credibility and makes my content highly valuable to the right audience. Ultimately, follower growth and trust built through professional expertise have driven income growth.

"When I got my first brand deal, I had just over 5,000 followers. Today, I have about 172,000. That visibility affects the premium I can charge for endorsements. Between 2023 and 2035, my creator income has roughly doubled."

Looking ahead, how do you think creators can sustain income and monetise long-term, considering that many still earn below ₦100,000 monthly and that only a small percentage make significant income?

Content creation alone isn't sustainable long-term unless you're at the top and consistently getting high-value endorsements running into double-digit millions annually. Even then, lifestyle inflation can make it unsustainable.

Creators need multiple income streams, books, courses, speaking engagements, consulting, brand deals, platform earnings. Even top YouTubers diversify because ad revenue alone isn't enough.

Here in Nigeria, subscription-based content isn't fully embraced especially for educational niches like mine where information is already available online. People are more willing to subscribe to content that teaches them how to make money or entertainment content by public figures.

What I do have going for me is a personal touch: relatable Nigerian humour, cultural context, and a health-education approach that feels close to home. But even then, diversification is key.

Do you think institutional funding, beyond brand sponsorships, makes sense for creators?

It depends on what the creator is building. For creators focused on socially conscious messaging, health education, anti-drug abuse campaigns, or community-based storytelling, institutional funding is actually the way to go. It allows them to produce higher-quality, long-form content, engage communities more meaningfully, and create impact at scale.

However, institutional funding comes with its own "wahala"—oversight, regulations, and sometimes compromised creative freedom. Institutions can dictate what they want you to create, so the creative license becomes limited. Ideally, institutions should allow creators room to express themselves within ethical boundaries while still delivering high-quality content that reaches more people.

From an investment perspective, many VCs focus more on funding creative enterprises than individual creators. They want ROI, not just visibility. With this in mind, how have your platforms, Agnosis Care and The Baby Convention, benefited from your creator career?

I agree, if content is your only product, institutional funding should come as grants, not loans or equity. Content creation income fluctuates because of algorithms, so using VC funding for content alone isn't financially sustainable.

My creator career helped me build visibility, trust, and community, factors that supported the birth and growth of Agnosis Care on Demand. During the pandemic, families couldn't access vaccinations easily, so the idea of taking vaccinations to people's homes emerged. While the original concept also included nurses offering basic home care like checking blood pressure or dressing wounds, it wasn't scalable due to logistics and safety concerns. But the vaccination-at-home model ("A New Home") took off. We've since onboarded several HMOs, including Avon and Headway, and we now operate in Lagos and Abuja.

My online community also inspired the Noisy Moms' WhatsApp group, a subscription-based support platform where I answer non-emergency primary healthcare questions from parents. Agnosis Care now manages the backend, subscriptions, archives, data management which frees me from answering the same questions repeatedly. We've even pinned templates for frequently asked topics like diarrhoea. We haven't aggressively marketed it yet; we're still refining systems before seeking institutional investment.

Before you approach investors formally, what structures are you working on that you know investors will expect to see?

The usual: airtight governance, strong oversight, clear legal frameworks, and standardized care protocols. We want consistency in service quality, regardless of who is answering the questions. These structures must be solid before investors even listen.

We're also expanding the ecosystem by building The Baby Convention, a health education trade fair created to bring together mothers, pregnant women, vendors, and the entire baby-care industry. Nigeria imports most baby-care products, unlike places like the UK or UAE that manufacture locally.

So whether you're a local brand or importer, The Baby Convention provides a platform to connect. The first edition, held in November 2024, recorded about 200 attendees over two days. It's the kind of initiative that can scale with proper investment and awareness.

As your brand grows and visibility increases, how do you protect your content, your intellectual property, and your professional reputation, especially with the rise of AI?

Honestly, it's tough. I've already been deepfaked. My image and name were used to promote a fake herbal remedy for hypertension. They gave me a strange accent, I mean, if you're going to clone me, at least use my Nigerian accent! Despite reporting it, Meta didn't take it down because it was a sponsored ad.
AI is here to stay, for good and for bad. My worry is limited because my niche paediatric health is specialized, and most people outside the field wouldn't try to replicate detailed medical advice to moms. Bigger influencers like Aproko Doctor are more exposed to AI misuse due to their broader audiences.
Still, **platforms must provide better tools to help creators detect and challenge AI misuse of their likeness.** We need the ability to report and remove abusive or misleading content.

Beyond AI, what about general IP theft on social media, people copying formats and ideas?

IP on social media is slippery. Everyone copies everyone, and trends are meant to be remixed. Platforms encourage remixes so that original creators get credited, but enforcement is weak. Your best recourse is reporting infringements or publicly calling out offenders which I avoid because it can create unnecessary drama.

A major challenge I've observed is geographical bias. Creators producing similar-quality content in the US, UK, or UAE get more visibility and engagement than those in Nigeria. It's likely economic platforms prioritize regions where ad revenue and purchasing power are higher. Nigerian creators must fight harder for the same visibility.

Speaking of scaling influence, have you considered leveraging your IP through edutainment shows or children-focused content?

Yes, absolutely. I've explored ideas similar to shows like "HiHo Kids" where kids interact with professionals. I'd love to create kid-friendly, educational, fun content tailored to Nigerian audiences.

Execution is the main challenge while juggling a 9–5, but the ecosystem for children's content in Nigeria is underdeveloped and full of opportunity. I'd love to pioneer something in that space.

So let's look ahead. In five years, what does success look like for you, clinically, creatively, and commercially?

In the past, I used to be obsessed with numbers, follower counts especially. I've learned that while brands love big numbers, a million followers is not everything. Still, reaching that milestone does indicate growth, and brands value that.

Creatively, I want The Baby Convention to become Africa's biggest parenting and mother-and-child event. It's a passion project for me. I want people to look forward to it every year, "Are you attending the Baby Convention this year?" and for it to become a household event that families keep returning to.

Beyond that, I want my impact to be global. Organizations like Global Citizen or One World rarely invite doctors or paediatricians. They mostly bring in entertainers. I'd like to see that shift—where health content creators are recognized as essential voices in the ecosystem.

If I can get lifesaving information to mothers—for example, explaining why applying mentholatum on a baby's hands or feet is dangerous and can lead to jaundice and brain damage—and mothers change their behaviour because of it, then I've done something meaningful.
I also want to take this work offline—running outreaches and supporting vulnerable women and children to make better health decisions.

Collaboration helps creators boost reach and grow communities. Does collaborating with other creators help with monetization or access to funding?

Collaborations boost visibility but don't significantly help monetization. Partnerships, on the other hand, are much more impactful.

A good example: I created a short 9–10 second video with Aproko Doctor at an event. He was drinking water, I was drinking Fanta, and the comic contrast made people laugh. That single video brought me over a thousand followers. I've never achieved that growth with my solo content. So while collaboration exposes you to new audiences, monetization still depends on strategy, not virality.

If you had access to a $100,000 creator fund, how would you deploy it to grow your brand and deepen your impact?

The first thing I would invest in is building a team and getting professional equipment—lighting, sound, cameras. High-quality content performs better, even though platforms encourage "relatable content." Crisp visuals capture attention and make the message more effective.

Second, I would invest in systems. Content creation should not stop at posting videos. To make it sustainable, you need a product or service your audience can access. If content creation is solely about making money, the day the money stops, creators get disillusioned and uninspired. Content should serve a bigger purpose, directing people to something valuable that you offer.

So I'd invest in making sure the backend systems, payment, access, logistics are solid so that people can easily access the products and services I recommend.

CONCLUSION

For what it is worth, the African creator economy has moved from the margins of digital culture to the centre of economic and social discourse. It represents one of the most vibrant and participatory movements on the continent today. Millions of young Africans are expressing themselves, building communities, and creating livelihoods through digital platforms.
Yet, the benefits and value capture remain highly uneven. The African creator economy's base is broad but thinly monetised. It is an ecosystem with mass participation but concentrated financial rewards. This distribution is not unusual; it reflects the global digital economy's "winner-takes-most" dynamic. However, in Africa, the consequences are sharper because this imbalance affects both opportunity and income. Not all creators will reach the top, but they should at least earn enough to make their efforts sustainable.

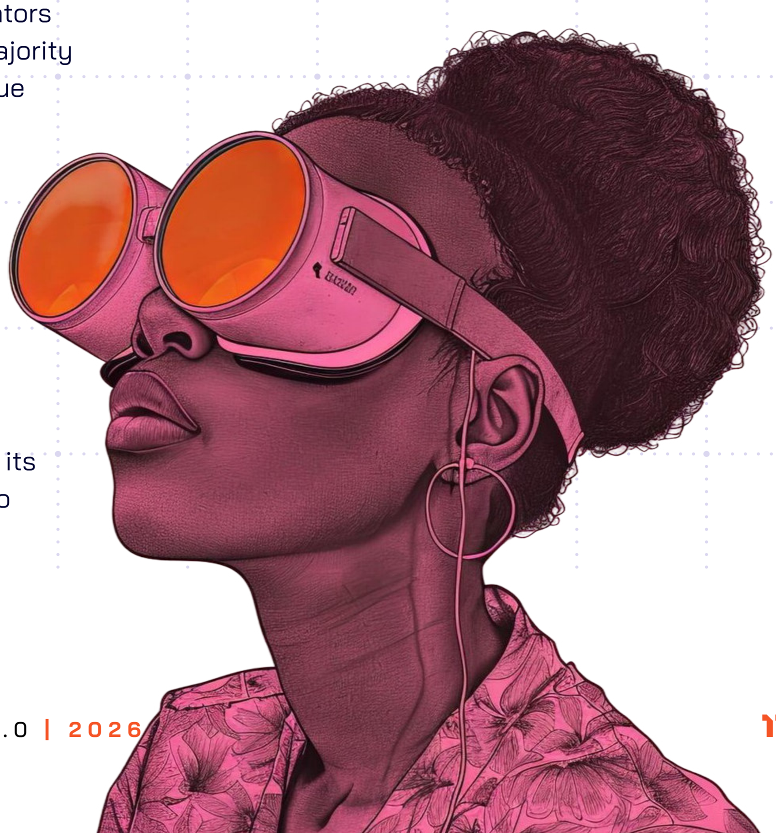
For the average African creator, virality rarely translates directly into income. Sustainable revenue often depends on converting visibility into off-platform assets such as brand partnerships and physical or digital product sales. Across the continent, creators tend to earn from what audiences are most willing to pay for, and that is what feels tangible and useful. However, few creators have the financial runway, business mentorship, or operational support needed to scale from personal brand to enterprise. This is why the ecosystem remains top-heavy: a handful of creators have successfully built businesses, while the majority operate as freelancers navigating volatile revenue cycles.

Many work solo, juggling creative production, brand management, client relations, and logistics, often alongside other part-time jobs. The result is a creator class that is big enough to keep existing, yet under-resourced to truly grow.

To realise the sector's full potential and achieve its projected growth, every stakeholder has a role to play: creators, investors, and policymakers. Creators must begin to view themselves as entrepreneurs, not just content producers. This requires building financial discipline, learning the fundamentals of business management, and formalising their operations as they grow.

Investors and policymakers, in turn, need to adopt more deliberate frameworks that recognise creators not merely as entertainers or influencers, but as emerging enterprises. This also means understanding the creator economy not as a single market, but as a continuum of growth stages. Micro-creators need ecosystem support through education, mentorship, and fair platform access. Mid-tier creators require business infrastructure such as financial literacy, formalised contracts, and improved cross-border payment systems. Top-tier creators, who already function as small media houses, need institutional capital and enabling policy environments that allow them to formalise, employ, and expand their work globally.

The long-term health of the African creator economy depends on how well these transitions are supported. Because its true promise lies not only in cultural visibility or digital participation, but in its capacity to generate sustainable businesses, jobs, and intellectual property that remain rooted on the continent.

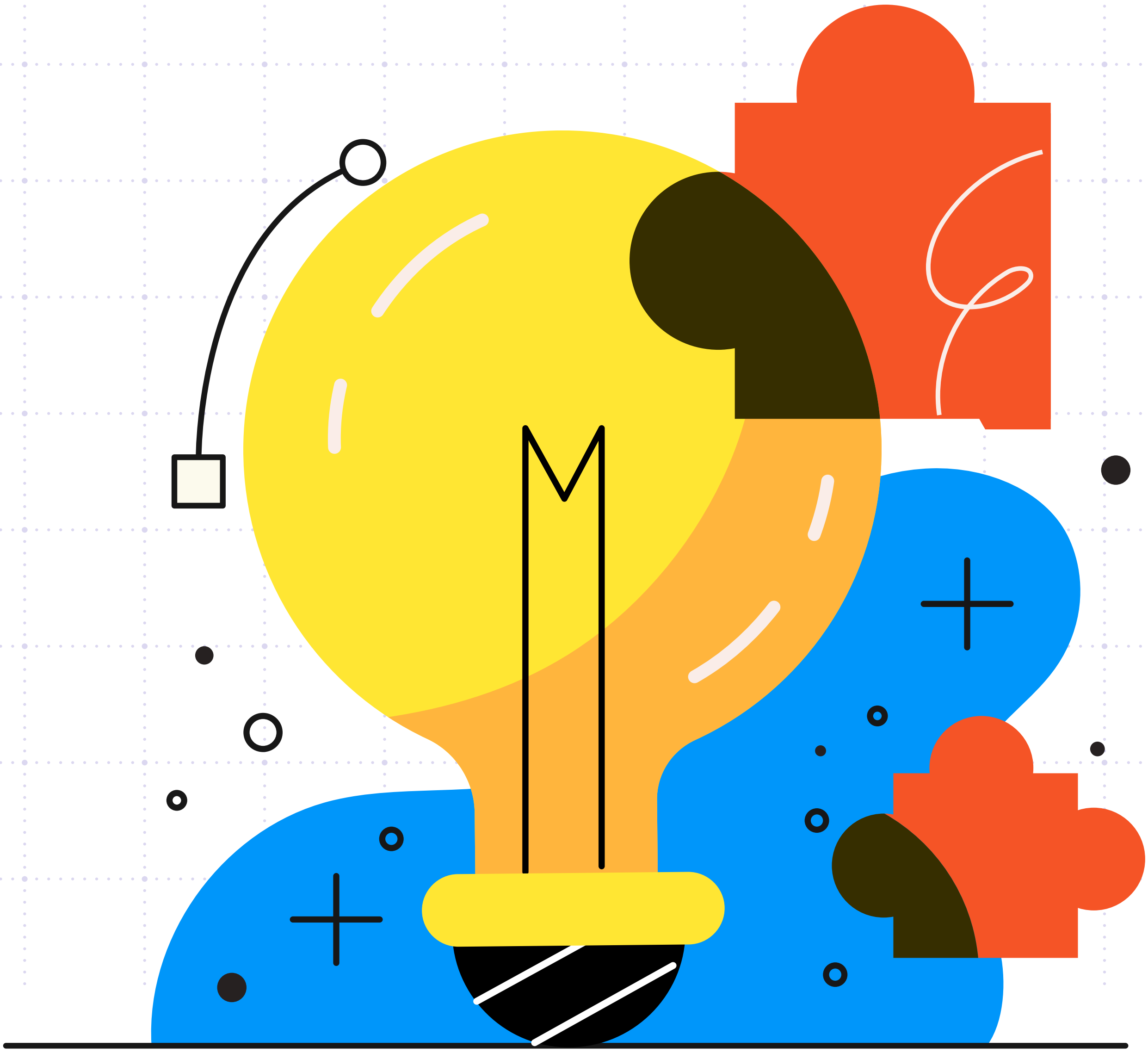


METHODOLOGY

To ensure all layers of Africa's creative economy, from income realities to investment ambitions, were captured, we adopted a 3-level methodology.

This report is based on:

- A quantitative survey across **all 52 African countries,** presented in English. The survey utilised multiple-choice questions that covered their demographics, investment readiness, funding, plans, and growth strategies.
- Focus group discussions with **creators from diverse sectors,** including media, technology, fashion, education, and healthcare.
- **In-depth interviews with investors,** platform founders, and ecosystem experts.



ABOUT TM GLOBAL

Technology Media Global is an agile and innovative full-service technology and media company trusted by top brands to help them achieve their business goals and objectives.

We are the powerhouse driving innovative tech and media solutions through our suite of specialised companies. With a deep understanding of evolving industries, TM Global equips clients to tackle complex challenges, seize market opportunities, and unlock their full potential through a seamless integration of design, technology, media, and strategic insights.

Behind our full-service solutions is a dynamic portfolio of brands, each a powerhouse in its own right. Allow us to introduce our innovative SBUs that make up TM Global:

TAKEOUT MEDIA

Takeout Media is a data-driven communications & advertising agency crafting campaigns that command attention through brand research, content & digital marketing, PR, and more.

ingene STUDIOS

Ingene Studios leverages video, animation, and commercial production to create culture-shaping narratives.

dsgn. teem

Design. teem is a strategy-led creative agency that illuminates brand stories through authentic, human-centred design across branding, motion design, UI/UX, and more.

TM LABS

TM Labs is our digital product company, helping businesses and individuals accelerate growth through digital innovation solutions.

TM Foundation

TM Foundation serves as our launchpad for nurturing African creative talent through TM CON, TM internships, skills training, and a global support network.

TM GLOBAL

ABOUT COMMUNIQUE

Communiqué is a creator-led media and intelligence firm dedicated to building the knowledge bank for Africa's creative economy. We operate at the intersection of media, creativity, and digital innovation, providing the data, insights, and expertise needed to bridge knowledge, talent, and investment gaps in the creative and cultural industries.

We engage over 140,000 entrepreneurs, creators, investors, policymakers, and operators across 105 countries. Our intelligence services deliver actionable insights and narratives that enable clients to make informed decisions, strengthen networks, and invest strategically in this rapidly growing sector. Our products and services include:

Communiqué Media

Original essays, reports, newsletters, and multimedia storytelling shaping conversations on Africa's creative economy.

Communiqué Advisory

Bespoke research, consulting, and strategy services for investors, development organisations, and creative enterprises.

Communiqué Events

Curated gatherings, roundtables, and flagship summits connecting industry leaders, policymakers, and investors.

Communiqué Research & Intelligence

Proprietary datasets, dashboards, and industry playbooks offering actionable insight for decision-makers.

CommuniquéOS (Creative Economy Database)

A dynamic, AI-powered platform indexing Africa's creative industries to drive smarter investment and collaboration.

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