

First pan-African ESG communications agency launched

Sophie Masipa, CEO of Fikira Consulting, and Kwame Senou, founder and managing director of Holding Opinion and Public, have joined forces to expand their offering in launching a new communications agency. The agency, Mwangano (alliance) will specialise in pan-African environment, social and governance (ESG).



Image supplied: Sophie Masipa and Kwame Senou

Mwangano ESG will serve companies that are prioritising ESG, to address the complex landscape of issues with an effective and clear communications strategy - and a team of senior specialists to implement it. The agency is based in Johannesburg, South Africa with another office in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The importance of ESG disclosure by companies has been lingering in Africa for decades, however, the Covid-19 pandemic has elevated the issue and now investors are convinced more than ever that companies should focus their resources on ESG.

According to Morningstar, by end of June 2021, global sustainability-themed fund assets grew by 12% to over \$2tn. Additionally, the world – especially Africa - has seen great efforts in achieving sound corporate governance in the past years. Although inclusivity has made many strides, there is still a long way to go.

Numerous global companies are changing their business objectives and policies, incorporating specific and binding ESG

related regulations that are aligned with the sustainability-related standards and goals set by organisations such as the World Economic Forum (WEF), and COP26.



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This is an increasingly growing trend that has a long-term outlook and requires partnerships across the private and public sectors. Moreover, global institutions are now creating ESG business divisions within, to help bolster their sustainable business approach.

Masipa says, “We are seeing an increase of ESG related crises for companies, and our ambition is to strategically guide entities and investors and help them tell their stories in a compelling manner. We have a dedicated team of experts and tools to proactively manage them and show their impact.”

“Our two agencies have had strategic relations for a while, this expansion of our offering opens doors and positions us well to also capitalise on the new economic synergies across Francophone and Anglophone markets, and opportunities presented by the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AFCFTA).” adds Masipa

ESG is expected to become mainstream in doing business as companies want to grow all while considering societal impact, preserving the environment and minimising the effects of climate change.

For the African continent, it is important for companies to build with the young population in mind. “This requires a deep-seated integration within companies’ policies, financial regulations, marketing, and advertising practices, as well as human relations (HR) policies,” says Senou.

“And that is precisely why we are introducing a specialist firm with African interest at the heart of it, which considers risks and opportunities on sustainability issues for domestic and international companies. At Mwangano, we are better positioned to deliver sustainable investment communications advisory,” he concludes.

The team will also be supported by a team of expert advisors in ESG, communications and business experts across Africa.

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