

Kigali Global Shapers partners with NAS to strengthen continental effort for a #VisaFreeAfrica

Despite the African Union's attempts over the past 30 years to address free movement on the continent - with the *Agenda 2063* plan to introduce a common African passport by 2020 in motion - African citizens still need visas to travel to 42 out of 54 African countries. To facilitate mobility in Africa, the Kigali Global Shapers has partnered with National Aviation Services (NAS) - the fastest growing aviation services provider in the emerging markets - for an exclusive sponsor of the global #VisaFreeAfrica campaign.

#VISAFREEAFRICA

(Source: NAS)

The #VisaFreeAfrica campaign, launched by the Kigali Global Shapers during the World Economic Forum for Africa in 2016 includes a global petition that calls for:

- All 54 African countries to grant a 30-day visa on arrival to all African citizens by 2022.
- Achieve free movement of people across all African countries by 2030.

In addition to the petition, Global Shapers across the African continent are engaging their leaders and policymakers in dialogues about the need to ease mobility on the continent. Through this initiative, African youth will find a platform to voice the reasons why facilitating movement of people across the continent now can fast-track the continent's 2063 Agenda.

Opening African borders

The NAS and VFA partnership took roots at the World Economic Forum meeting held in Davos, Switzerland in January 2017 and was formalised almost immediately. NAS has made a five-year commitment to support this campaign which will be implemented in several African countries in the coming months.

Michaella Rugwizangoga, curator at World Economic Forum Global Shapers said: "With support from National Aviation Services, the Kigali Shapers will be able to better coordinate a continental effort towards open African borders and facilitate the removal of visa requirements on the continent."



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Mobility issues faced by African youth and businesses

On a global scale, Africa's competitiveness is tied to labour mobility. With the African market set to grow to two billion by 2050, greater integration and human mobility is the need of the hour. Liberal visa policies will help boost tourism revenues, foster new business opportunities and facilitate economic growth. It will also open up new job opportunities to the [60 percent of African youth](#) that is currently unemployed.

Hassan El-Houry, Group CEO NAS, said: "NAS has a presence in over ten airports in Africa and continues to grow quickly in the region. As we expand our footprint of operations in Africa, our responsibility towards the local communities also increases. As a partner in Africa's development, we are aware of the mobility issues faced by youth and businesses in the region. With our investments in the region and by supporting Visa Free Africa, we continue to drive efforts for the development of the continent and its people."

NAS operates across the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia, with a presence at 30 airports, managing more than 31 airport lounges and handling seven of the world's top 10 airlines. With an employee base of over 8,000 capable and experienced employees at the core of its network, NAS is committed to providing aviation services that benchmark to the best in the world.

[**Sign the petition.**](#)

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