

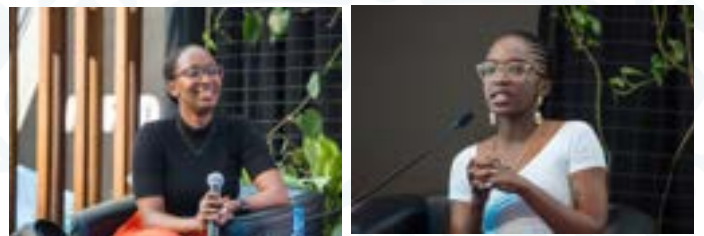
# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2022

#breakthebias

On March 8th, 2022, we had the pleasure of collaborating with Norrsken Kigali to host a Women's Day event dedicated to celebrating the accomplishments and contributions of women entrepreneurs across various fields while inspiring them to push beyond barriers and achieve even greater success.



Successful women entrepreneurs shared their experience & learning with a large audience consisting predominantly of young start-ups & key eco-system players.





## BPN RWANDA TURNED 10

On May 11, 2022, at BPN Rwanda, we celebrated our 10th anniversary. The event took place in Kigali at the Park Inn Hotel by Radisson. As we wanted it to be a day contributing to entrepreneurship in Rwanda, the event's theme was "Digitalization, Innovation & a knowledge-based Economy." Government officials, such as heads of institutions, finance and private sector experts, Ambassadors, entrepreneurs, BPN Board members from Switzerland and BPN friends graced the event. All were people and institutions who have been instrumental in the journey that BPN has been on in Rwanda.



At the opening of the ceremony, a moment of silence was taken in remembrance of the late Mr Jürg Opprecht, the founder of BPN, who passed away in July 2021. After that, his wife, Ms Benzli Opprecht, a BPN co-Founder and Board Member, addressed her opening remarks to the guests and commended Rwanda's progress and the partnership BPN has established with the country.

BPN Rwanda's Country Director, Mrs Alice Mkulikiyinka, gave a heartwarming snapshot of the BPN Rwanda journey, reflecting on humble beginnings and acknowledging milestones the organization has achieved over the past decade. She hailed the collaboration with Rwanda government and appreciated the presence of government representatives as well as the role their leadership has played in the BPN Rwanda success story. In a special way, she lauded the support of BPN global and their commitment to supporting Rwanda's entrepreneurship ecosystem, which directly feeds the heart of the country's economy.



Several entrepreneurs shared their success stories and how BPN has acted as their partner for growth

**PARADINE NISHIMWE**, owner of Wood Habitat gave a tear-jerking testimony about her business idea that was born while she was pregnant and not thinking much about entrepreneurship, and how BPN helped her grow from a hobby to a business. She recalled thinking about quitting her business several times and spoke fondly about how BPN did not give up on her. She credits her resilience and futuristic entrepreneur mindset to BPN. A teary testimony, many guests in the room evidently resonated with!





**JOHNSON THE BAKER**, a newcomer, shared his unconventional story, from his love for the kitchen as a young boy to the structure and financial stability that BPN gave to his business.



**RITAH UWERA** of Toddle care shared her journey of starting a business at home and how BPN saw her potential and equipped her with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. A moving testimony on how she felt empowered to be a leader and the impressive results that came with it.



**LISE HUMURA** told her story of opening a daycare after struggling to find one that met her standards. Prior to being approached by BPN, she was barely earning a salary and paying those she employed was a challenge, but after encountering BPN, her business is now thriving. She spoke highly of the opportunity to have a support system that BPN offers.



Jean Pierre Gashugi, MD of Comright, announced the launch of "The Magnet Institute", an initiative by entrepreneurs who graduated from BPN Rwanda.

The aim of the initiative is to tackle one of the pressing issues in the growth of SMEs: The lack of skilled middle managers. SMEs tend to micromanage their businesses rather than focusing on the strategic growth of the company. Entrepreneurs want to be the solution to this issue.

A panel session discussed the role of Digitalization, Innovation and a knowledge-based Economy by Hon. Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT; Ms. Rolande Pryce, Country Representative World Bank; and Moses Turahirwa, CEO Moshions.





In the name of the Government of Rwanda, Minister Beata Habyarimana expressed the country's commitment to supporting entrepreneurship as a key contributor to Private sector development. She expressed the government's recognition and gratitude for BPN's consistent and impactful contribution. The minister conveyed the government's readiness and commitment to a continued and strengthened partnership with BPN.





10  
Years  
in Rwanda

**BPN**  
Business Professionals Network

# PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS





# BPN'S AUDIENCE AT H.E. PAUL KAGAME'S OFFICE



On Thursday, 12th May 2022, on the occasion of BPN Rwanda's 10th anniversary, H.E. President Paul Kagame welcomed a delegation from BPN at Urugwiro Village.

The audience at His Excellency's office was an opportunity that the President took to acknowledge the organization's contribution to entrepreneurship in Rwanda, emphasizing the role of entrepreneurs in driving economic growth and creating not just jobs but dignifying jobs and reaffirming his commitment to supporting entrepreneurship and economic development in Rwanda.



During the meeting, BPN's delegates expressed their gratitude to the President for his unwavering support of entrepreneurship in the country. They committed to continuing to provide high-quality, impactful Business Development Support to SMEs in Rwanda. The BPN delegation included Rwandan entrepreneurs Ysolde Shimwe and Vincent Mugisha, founders of Uzuri K&Y and Digitec studios, who represented other entrepreneurs in this high-level meeting. They took the opportunity to advocate for their peers **"We are no longer passive receivers of government support. We are ready to be partners with the Government"**.

The visit was a testament to the importance of supporting entrepreneurship in emerging economies. With the continued support and commitment of all stakeholders who were present, incl. MINICOM and RDB, Rwanda is well-positioned to continue its economic development and achieve long-term prosperity.





## CHOGM 2022: MEET THE RWANDAN ENTREPRENEURS



The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2022 took place on 20-25 June 2022 in Kigali, Rwanda, where 6374 delegates from across the globe met in Kigali. This was one of the biggest highlights of Rwanda's entire event calendar. Part of BPN Rwanda's appeal to entrepreneurs is the belief that the organisation has in the entrepreneurs who graduate from the program and become successful businesspeople. BPN takes every opportunity to support and showcase these businesses.

BPN and I&M initiated a "Meet The Rwandan Entrepreneurs" space during the CHOGM event. The showcase was a showroom that featured BPN businesses in an interactive and engaging manner, encouraging visitors to learn about each business and purchase products. It incorporated both product-based and service-based businesses in the showroom, creating a seamless opportunity for both businesses and guests.



Hot coffee and snacks were provided by some of Kigali's leading bakers and coffee shops – all members of the BPN program, creating a welcoming environment. The session, 'Meet the Entrepreneurs', allowed guests to have comfortable sit-down discussions over coffee to speak about what it means to do business in Rwanda and beyond.



# GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK 2022

Every year, BPN joins the world to celebrate entrepreneurs, their achievements, and their impact on Communities. In 2022, BPN hosted three events together with BPN's partners to honor the entrepreneurs they serve. In total, around 150 people attended these events.





# RWANDA X ISRAEL BUSINESS BREAKFAST

POWERED BY RWANDA DEVELOPMENT BOARD (RDB)



Alice Nkulikiyinka, our Country Director, welcomed Itzhak Fisher, the chair of the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), and a group of investors to Wood Habitat, which is owned by Paradis Imfura Nishimwe, to introduce them to the BPN enterprises. Potential synergies for future collaborations were discussed, as were anecdotes and lessons learned from previous business endeavours. What a wonderful start to the day. What a fantastic morning it was. It finished with informal networking.



Applause for Johnson Runuya's delicious cookies!





# BPN RWANDA'S COUNTRY DIRECTOR RECEIVED THE **BEN AFRICA'S** QUIVER AWARD

On November 4th, 2022, our Country Director, Mrs Alice Nkulikiyinka, received the BEN-AFRICA'S QUIVER AWARD for her outstanding commitment to sound business practices in Rwanda. The Award was granted by BEN-Africa, **The Business Ethics Network (BEN) of Africa.**

Our country Director advocated for BPN to come to Rwanda. She gave up her international career to come and establish BPN in Rwanda. We are grateful that her commendable dedication and commitment to this cause are felt and rewarded.



BPN's work focuses mainly on promoting **Value-Based Entrepreneurship**. It is the deeply felt belief that if a group of entrepreneurs share values like honesty, punctuality, diligence, transparency, integrity and trustworthiness, they can create an environment that is best for both business and country. BPN motivates entrepreneurs to create something that is not only good for them, but something that creates value for others as well. BPN clients learn to care for the people that are directly or indirectly involved in their businesses and to run their businesses with a serving attitude.





# DEMYSTIFYING BANKING

AN INITIATIVE BY MASTERCARD FOUNDATION, I&M BANK & BPN

In November of 2022, once again, we partnered with Mastercard Foundation and I&M Bank to deliver extensive 'Banking for SMEs' training. We empowered 54 entrepreneurs in the Tourism & Hospitality sector and its value chains.



The attendees were equipped with the necessary knowledge on how best to work with financial institutions, turning the relationship into a partnership for growth.

