



# Realtor feted for Digital Transformation and Social virtues

BY GERARD NYELE

In Kenya, the right to housing is embedded in the constitution, which provides that "Every person has the right to accessible and adequate housing, and to reasonable standards of sanitation."

At the start of his second term in 2018, Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta launched an affordable housing programme as one of the big four agenda pillars to promote long-term economic development. The other pillars are food and nutrition security, a robust manufacturing sector, and universal healthcare.

Kenya needs to build 250,000 units annually for at least four years to plug its cumulative housing deficit of two million units.

The lowest cost of a new house is estimated at \$11,000 (KSh1.1 million), and only about 11% of Kenyans earn enough to support a mortgage. Public and private housing developers have previously concentrated on the middle and high-income groups.

This scenario indicates the miles that Kenya has to cover within the real estate sector before the affordable housing agenda is achieved.

Meanwhile, the sector continues to post growth and versatility in

business despite the tempting economic environment occasioned by transitioning government policies and the effects of covid -19 pandemic.

Among other winners, Username Investment Ltd. bagged two awards during the 2022 Top 100 Mid-sized Companies Award Ceremony recently held recently.

The realtor emerged top in two categories, Digital Transformation and Corporate Social Responsibility/ Philanthropy after a thorough Survey conducted by KPMG and Nation Media Group.

This was the 14th annual Top 100 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) award after a two-year break due to Covid-19.

The survey focuses on fast-growing mid-sized companies in recognition of the fact that the SME sector is a key contributor to economic growth.

The win emphasizes the need for social responsibility virtues as well as innovation during the digital transformation era

"It is an honor to receive two awards in this competitive and highly coveted award in Kenya. This recognition is a Team effort and a culmination of accomplishments ever since we started operation in 2013," Said Reuben Kimani, CEO, of Username Investment while

receiving the awards.

"As a company, we remain committed to providing affordable land to millions of Kenyans at affordable prices and with flexible payment plans", He added.

According to MARCO Research on Post-Covid Consumer behavior, 85 percent of Kenyans are regular online shoppers.

Further, a MasterCard study on consumer spending revealed that nearly four out of five (79 percent) surveyed consumers in Kenya are shopping more online since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kimani says " we have digitized our key functions. To make it convenient for our customers to invest in property, we have digitized our website and in the comfort of your home, you can view our properties, select your preferred plot, fill in an online plot booking form and receive a copy to your email address, make payments and receive a digital receipt with a verifiable QR code.

He continued, "As evident in our winning innovation, It has made it easy for Kenyans in the diaspora to invest in properties back home with ease. Award organizers for recognizing Username Investments in Digital Transformation Category",

Early this month Lands Cabinet Secretary Zachariah Njeru reaffirmed



Username Investments Directors (From) left Reuben Kimani, CEO, and directors Joseph Gitonga & Julius Karanja Pose for a photo moment after receiving awards during Top 100 Mid-sized Company Award ceremony.

the Government's commitment to roll out land digitization countrywide through the Ardisasa Platform. The rollout is expected to make it easier to search, retrieve, update records, transfer and register land. According to Kimani, "this is a great move that will make investing convenient and transparent across the country

without lengthy due diligence processes."

On the social responsibility end, Reuben explained the need to empower young people, "we have been playing a key role in ensuring the bright and needy students access quality education through sponsorships through Username

Foundation. We believe that education is an equalizer and we aim at giving every young person an opportunity to fulfill their dreams.

He encouraged start-ups to digitize their key functions to unlock their full potential in various aspects.

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