

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

# ZIMBA WOMEN



Influencing Change in Market access

## WHAT WE DO

We are using technology to find innovative solutions to create sustainable futures for women around sub-Saharan Africa. Zimbabwe women is creating opportunities for African women to actively, safely, and fairly participate in the economy by providing them access to skills and training.

We have established a socio-economic conscious business environment that includes the full support of women entrepreneurs.

## OUR VISION

To be the leading women's e-commerce provider in Africa by 2025 with over 5,000,000 merchants fully equipped with business, IT and marketing skills with over 50,000,000 customers to support them.

## OUR MISSION

To enable the empowerment and development of women entrepreneurs in Africa by providing cross-cutting e-solutions and technology to provide affordable market accessibility and capacity building.

**"It's the future of African Women. Something that we can all count on "- Jimmy Ruva**



## Founder's Words



However, they lag behind not only economically but also socially due to our historical and cultural context barriers. This, in turn, means they may be unable to access markets, finance, and social services, therefore, most of their small businesses do not thrive beyond a year. The current COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated this by not only widening the economic gap due to many women-owned small businesses struggling with closure but also highlighting several inequalities and social justice issues. Nevertheless, it has encouraged a Digital Transformation of which ZIMBA WOMEN has been a champion during the past year.

This month, we mark the beginning of a New Year, a new chapter of HOPE.

As we mark 5 years, we invite you to celebrate and support all women in business. Those who came before us and those for whom we hold the torch for the future. We also welcome you to sharing an experience with us, to live but for a moment in our lives. Welcome to our ZIMBA WOMEN stories. Across Africa, especially in the sub-Saharan region, women are known for being serial entrepreneurs.

**“We must invest in our future to foster RESILIENCE for such crisis and those that the future may hold. Through our Young Women STEM mentorship program, we are building technology that will be used by both our current and upcoming entrepreneurs. We cannot afford to sit back and do nothing. We must innovate, work smart, and hard to remove any barriers that hold women back through job creation.”**

Zimba means “BUILD, NURTURE, FOSTER.” Never before has the impact of these words been felt like now. We have nurtured a sisterhood with increasing visibility of influencing change.

We held trainings, webinars, and sometimes just informal online coffee discussions to share our experiences. We have encouraged our women to do things differently; to INNOVATE, COLLABORATE AND REBUILD.

As you read about our COVID-19 RECOVERY PROGRAM, you will see that our women are CHANGEMAKERS who will go into their communities to influence economic recovery in their communities consequently our country.

Access to technology is seen as an enabler for women entrepreneurs. This Digital Transformation is the gateway to a future never imagined before.

It gives us a chance to overcome the economic, cultural, and physical barriers that prevent us from accessing markets. In order to join forces with our community, We launched the ZIMBA MART, an online marketplace because, without quick action, digital Transformation will push women further behind.

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Happy New Year!

**Peace Kuteesa,  
Founder and COO, Zimba Women**



# 2020 Highlights

## Embracing E-Commerce

One of the huge motivating factors for women in Africa for self-employment and entrepreneurship is access to larger markets. We are passionate about finding ways to support women with their businesses via digital channels and through providing tools to engage in trade. We are thrilled to have launched the Zimba Mart, an online e-commerce platform that exposes products from SMEs to a vast local and international online market in a supportive, all-inclusive, and friendly and environment.



The platform makes it easy to obtain valuable items ranging from vegetables, fruits to household materials that can be delivered to your place of convenience. These entrepreneurs are able to build and manage their own online stores with Zimba Group's custom E-commerce software. The Zimba Mart has been supported by our Capacity Building programs in partnership with the US Embassy in Uganda, The Mastercard Foundation, The Innovation Village, and Funzi.

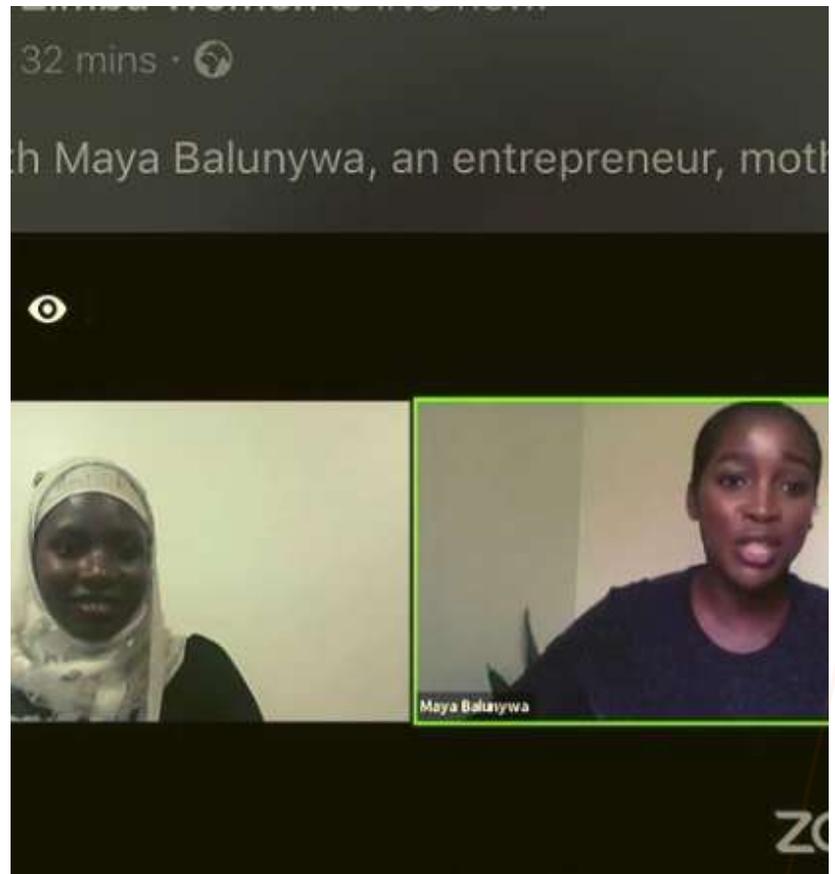
If you are looking to join our cohort of women now in our digital market, email us at [info@zimbawomen.org](mailto:info@zimbawomen.org).



# Welcome to the Zimba Mart

## Support during a crisis

Now more than ever, it is important that women entrepreneurs leverage technology to grow their businesses. Despite the challenges the COVID-19 crisis presented, it also presented a lot of opportunities among which is the encouragement of digital transformation, especially for business owners. To help businesswomen adapt changing business environment due to the pandemic, we conducted a number of webinars and social media chats where we invited entrepreneurs and industry experts like Kemigisha Gloria, Jeanne Nyangoma, Stella Kiwanuka, Doreen Nakibombo, Maya



Balunywa who shared insights on how businesswomen can harness the potential of technology for business continuity.



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**“We considered the impact of the crisis on the SMEs business from all angles (cash, supply chain, people, etc) and built a tailored action plan which included social tools to keep our community of women engaged, a tech toolkit to get those that weren’t already using technology up to speed and finally the Zimba Mart for them to continue business online.”– Sherifah Tumusiime, Founder and CEO, Zimba Women**

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# Zimba Women COVID-19 Recovery Program



In partnership with the Innovation Village with support from Funzi, we successfully run our COVID Recovery and Business Development masterclass that kickstarted in September. Many small women-owned businesses across Uganda have been affected by this crisis and been tasked to refine and restructure their business strategies to meet their customers' changing needs.

**"The business model has really taught me how to focus on what I'm giving to my clients and my value propositions and who my key partners are. I know this information is going to be resourceful to me in improving my company and my brand." - Revival Kemigisha, Director Oeuvre Events**

The 6- week training equipped women entrepreneurs with information and skills that have allowed them to develop innovative strategies to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and also gain a competitive edge in the market.

We graduated a total of 150 female students from both our first and second cohort who participated both online and offline all equipped with leadership, management, finance, and digital literacy skills.

The program gave entrepreneurs a platform to network and learn from other women in business and create meaningful partnerships. Our dream is to see these women compete favorably in the economy and we will continue to support them along their journey.

**I'm so happy to be apart of this program. I've gotten insight about being the founder of a business, It has given me more to think about in regards to how I can adjust to growth and take my business to the next level. - Mushra Rajab; CEO, Keesha Creations.**

**After being taken through the various models on the founder, inventor, manager, banker, and leader, I have learned so much about what skills I have to develop to be a successful entrepreneur. I have learned to create products that are more relevant to the customer through the inventor session. I am now in the process of restructuring and get back on track with my business by next year” - Josephine Alujo; CEO, Amari Foods**

**I have attended the Zimba Women Business Program which has positively shaped me to be a visionary leader. We are now looking at opening up HomeXtra's branches in Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania in the next 2-5 years. - Jackie Namwase; Director, Home Xtras.**



# Women in Leadership and STEM



Mentorship plays a huge role in helping women and girls overcome barriers they face and accelerate the strides they are already making. We were thrilled to have kickstarted our mentorship early this year in March with 54 mentees and mentors on board. Our program aims to provide advice, leadership tips, and tools for young women to live purposeful and well-rounded lives. The program places

emphasis on leadership, personal, emotional, and professional development as well as advice on cultivating positive attitudes and building self-confidence. We are glad to see the women benefit from these relationships and look forward to creating more spaces where women can safely share and help each other grow.

## Our Impact





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## Our Partners

**Deloitte.**

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