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Kenyan-Born **JAMES KAMAU** Gives Hope to Youth in Canada & Kenya

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THE NEW YEAR'S ISSUE

**CAREER FAIR** | **EDUCATING AFRICAN WOMEN** | **TFSA or RRSP?**

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More on Page 10

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## Foreign Workers Shouldn't Get Jobs Canadians Can Do: - Kenney, Immigration Minister

Immigration Minister Jason Kenney said Wednesday he wants to ensure the temporary foreign work program operates "on the basis of Canadians first" in light of concerns raised about permits granted to Chinese miners at a B.C. coal mine. "Companies cannot access foreign workers unless or until they have demonstrated to the government that they have advertised the job in Canada, offering it to any qualified Canadians," Kenney told QMI Agency. "We never want to give jobs away to foreign workers if qualified Canadians are available and applying for them." Human Resources and Skills Development Canada is now investigating why the work permits were granted to about 200 mine workers at HD Mining International Ltd., located west of Grand Prairie, Alta. Employers who wish to hire temporary foreign workers must apply for a "labour market opinion" from Service Canada that assesses "the impact the foreign worker would have on Canada's labour market."

"Concerns have come to light, subsequent to these labour market opinions being approved for that particular mine, that Mandarin was listed as a work requirement," Kenney said. "I understand HRSDC is taking a look at that to see if that was a valid work requirement." The federal NDP has called for an "immediate suspension" of the permits and wants a full investigation to see if Canadian workers were given an opportunity to apply for the positions. NDP immigration critic Jinny Sims also worries about how Canada's temporary foreign worker system operates under the Conservative government. "This government has made it so much easier ... to bring in temporary foreign workers," she said. "There's a huge incentive. You can pay them up to 15% less. The Canadian Labour Congress and other unions have also hammered the feds for approving the work permits, saying Canadian workers need long-term employment. The employment standards arm of the B.C. Ministry of Jobs and Tourism announced on Oct. 19 it would investigate HD Mining. The province said the "workers hired for this were recruited due to a lack of individuals in Canada with the necessary long wall mine training," and cited a lack of training available in the province for this type of work. ( By Michael Mui )



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A member of the church's Outreach Committee (in white t-shirt) hugs one of the Scarborough community members in demonstration of sisterly love.



Community Members Distributing food at the church premises

## Community Outreach: Redeemed Christian Church of God, Jesus House Scarborough Reaches Out to the Community

BY AFRICAN IMMIGRANT MAGAZINE

The Redeemed Church of God, Jesus House Scarborough on December 22, 2012 extended a hand of fellowship to the community when it opened its doors and distributed several hundred pounds of canned food to hundreds of Scarborough residents in line with the holiday spirit of giving, care and compassion. The Coordinator of the Community Outreach Organizing Community, Tunji Irelewuyi, in a chat with African Immigrant Magazine noted the resounding success of the program and lauded the efforts of the committee in making it a success. "It was a very successful program and we thank God for the lives we are able to touch through this program." It should be noted that in 2011, the church embarked on a similar program when it donated several boxes of canned food to the Agin Court Community Centre in Scarborough to be distributed to needy families. According Irelewuyi, the church is resolved to having a significant impact on its community and this is just one of the ways of achieving such noble objective. In line with its mission and biblical injunction, it intends to continue this trend to touch a many lives as possible. For more information on the church, located at 32 Progress Ave, Scarborough, ON visit its website at [www.rccgjesushouse.ca](http://www.rccgjesushouse.ca).

From P. 16

not to get stuck in a menial job that is hard to move upward from. It would be smart to consult directly with one of those local newcomer agencies mentioned above. They can offer you a personal advise based on the details of your specific circumstances.

### More About "Canadian Experience"

According to Jeffrey Lee, some industries such as IT (Information Technology, e.g. computing, software, telecommunications) may be less strict about where your experience is gained. Therefore this field might be easier to penetrate in Canada. At present, European-trained engineers may also have an easier time to get their credentials acknowledged than ones trained in Asia or the Middle East. Other skilled immigrants can benefit from a program offered by the not-for-profit Allies, says Peter Dudka. Allies has created a National Mentoring Initiative in various cities across Canada. Mentoring offers a connection between a skilled immigrant and an established Canadian professional in the same or related occupation. It's a way of helping skilled newcomers integrate into the workforce faster. Working in this great country can be marvelous. There are all sorts of challenges and rewards for immigrants. Getting your start here can be difficult, no doubt. It will make things easier if you're prepared when the interviewer asks: "Tell us about your Canadian experience." (Monster.ca)

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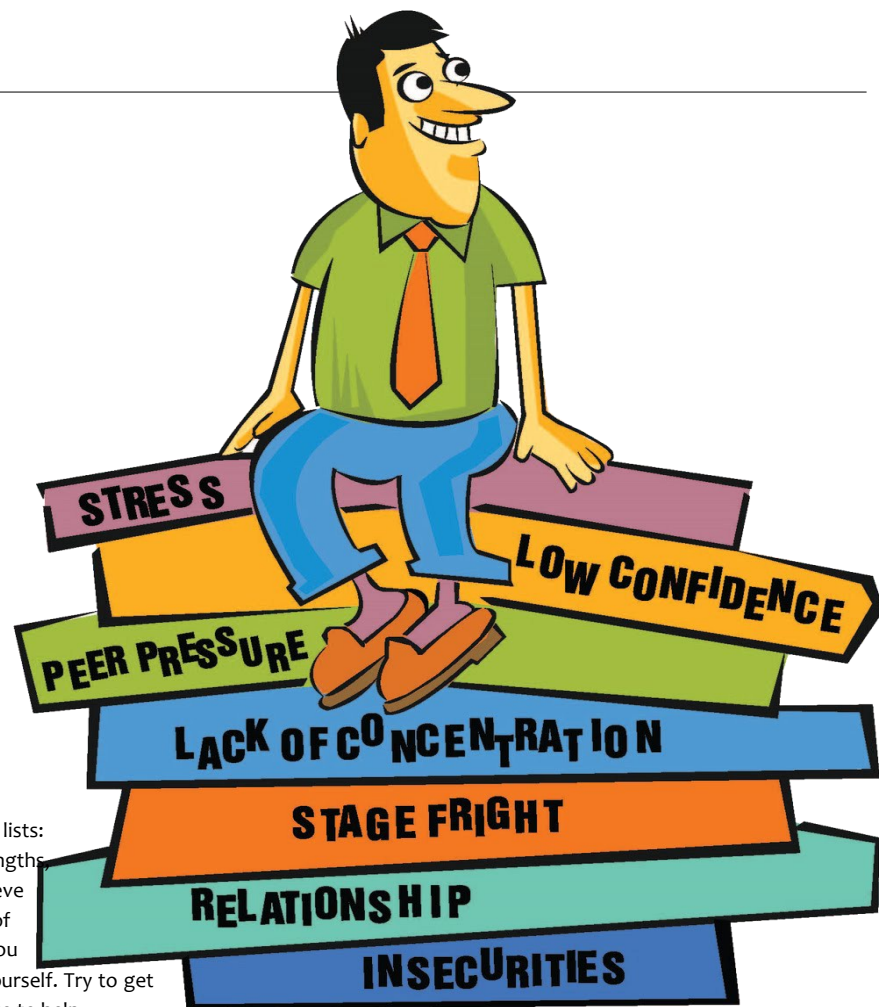
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## Building Your Self-Esteem:

Your Road to Professional Success—Five Helpful Hints

**L**ow self-esteem can predispose you to developing a mental disorder, and developing a mental disorder can in turn deliver a huge knock to your self-esteem. In some cases, low self-esteem is in itself a cardinal feature of mental disorder, for example, in depression or in borderline personality disorder. The relationship between low self-esteem and mental disorder is complex, and a person with a mental disorder is more likely than most to suffer from long-term low self-esteem. People with long-term low self-esteem generally see the world as a hostile place and themselves as its victim. As a result, they feel reluctant to express and assert themselves, miss out on experiences and opportunities, and feel helpless about changing things. All this merely lowers their self-esteem even further, and they end up getting caught in a downward spiral. Thankfully, there are a number of simple things that can boost self-esteem. You may already be doing some of these things, and you certainly don't need to do them all. Just do those that you feel most comfortable with.

1. Make three lists: One of your strengths, one of your achievements, and one of the things that you admire about yourself. Try to get a friend or relative to help you with these lists. Keep the lists in a safe place and read through them regularly.
2. Think positively about yourself. Remind yourself that, despite your problems, you are a unique, special, and valuable person, and that you deserve to feel good about yourself. Identify and challenge any negative thoughts that you may have about yourself, such as 'I am a loser', 'I never do anything right', or 'No one really likes me'.
3. Pay special attention to your personal hygiene: for example, style your hair, trim your nails, floss your teeth.
4. Dress in clothes that make you feel good about yourself.
5. Eat good food as part of a healthy, balanced diet. Make meal times a special time, even if you are eating alone. Turn off the TV or radio, set the table, and arrange your food so that it looks attractive on your plate. This often boosts morale and self-confidence. Go ahead and try.



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PROF. PHIL TAM-AL ALALIBO

It is not easy being an immigrant in Canada with all the attendant challenges and hurdles that usually accompany such a status. Many who came to Canada, unable to find befitting jobs and careers have given up and returned to their native countries. According to statistics, about 12 percent of new immigrants return to their home countries after

realizing that life in Canada was simply not suitable for them and their families. They become frustrated, with some disillusioned and confused leading to outright rejection of Canada. This is unfortunate and indicative of a trend where many would-be immigrants simply overwhelmed by the sheer opportunity of immigrating to Canada do not apply due diligence in researching their new home. A gentleman who was a banking executive in Zimbabwe recently returned home in tears after realizing that he had given up so much to immigrate to Canada only to lead what he called a "debased life."

Admittedly, Canada is not for everyone, some are better suited here and others perhaps in a different environment. However, for those already here, it will be advisable to give the best effort to ensure success. Many give up at the slightest hurdle and challenges proffering not to be resilient and being resentful of the system, and yet, there are many immigrants with a "growth" mindset who have succeeded against all odds refusing to accept their condition and working hard to improve their lot. It would be useful to learn how to take advantage of opportunities such as education, training, etc, to enhance one's chances of success in Canada.

## COMING NEXT ISSUE

### February 2013:

- A Look at Black History Month
- Improving Your Credentials
- Would You Be My Valentine?
- What About Your TFSA?

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## Giving Your Best in Canada



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# -James Kamau- JAMMING WITH the YOUTH

Upon immigrating to Canada in 2006, a time when many would relieve themselves of prior commitments and face the daunting task of integration into the Canadian society, he felt the need to reconnect with the youth to optimize their potential.

BY PROF. PHILIP TAM-AL ALALIBO

While many immigrants come to Canada and jettison their passion in the face of current realities, for the tall and imposing Kenyan-born immigrant, James Kamau, it provided a unique opportunity to continue working with the youth in the Vancouver area to build capacity and provide an opportunity for them to realize their dreams. James' passion for the youth is a manifestation of his own experience growing up in his native Kenya and living close to Kibera, one of the biggest and most poverty-stricken slums in sub Sahara Africa.

In an exclusive interview with African Immigrant Magazine, he revealed how that experience shaped his life and became a catalyst for his work with the youth. "Living close to Kibera, I saw poverty and how it affected the children. Kids were dropping out of school at such a young age and that makes them vulnerable to all manner of vices," he noted.

James stated his own family circumstances which provided further motivation to make a difference in the lives of the youth not only in his new adopted country, Canada, but also in the country he left behind, Kenya. He credits his parents for their relentless efforts in ensuring that he has a bright future through education. While carving a better future for himself through education, he realized his passion at a very young age of the need to give back to his community by getting involved in youth development.

Soon after graduating from the Kenya School of Social Work, he secured an internship with The One-Stop Youth Centre in Nairobi founded by the United Nations and City Council of Nairobi. This provided him an opportunity to teach the youngsters business and vocational skills to achieve self-sufficiency. Still in pursuit of his passion for youth development and empowerment, he continued his work with the help of few friends and founded Dagoretti Youth Development Organization (DYDO). At the Dagoretti Community, sports, soccer in particular, was used as a platform for interaction with the youth to ensure their continued engagement in positive and team related activities that would build capacity and confidence.

Upon immigrating to Canada in 2006, a time when many would relieve themselves of prior commitments and face the daunting task of integration into the Canadian society, he felt the need to reconnect with the youth to optimize their potential. That need led him to volunteer with Oxfam, a reputable Canadian non-profit organization, to end poverty in Vancouver's most needy communities. He noted, "I wanted to stay connected to the work I was doing in Kenya and the best way to achieve that was to work with youth in my adopted country." Driven and em-

boldened by his successes, in 2009, James founded the Youth Initiative Canada (YIC) organization (of which he is the executive director) which primarily seeks to empower young people through sports, education and entrepreneurship. YIC runs the highly successful "Beyond Hoops" program in Canada and Kenya, a program which, as the name suggests, is truly beyond "hoops", comprising of youth of all backgrounds that use the program as suitable medium for self-expression, exploration of skills and potential in a safe and endearing environment. "Beyond Hoops" also seeks to connect young people with role models, mentors, community leaders and educators with a view to opening the communication channels as a means to resolving some of the most critical issues affecting the youth in the communities.

Though resident in Canada, James continues to have a significant impact on the youth in his community in Kenya by providing sports equipment donated by Canadian organizations and shipping to Kenya. Once a year, he travels to Kenya to ensure the sustainability of the (youth) programs he left behind. To underscore his unflappable commitment, his organization (YIC) currently sponsors 15 elementary school children mostly from poverty stricken families and neighborhoods who otherwise may not have access to education. "We are doing what we can to support these children," noted the energetic youth worker.

James believes that a critical challenge facing youth in Kenya today is that of a defeatist mindset of poverty and deprivation, which invariably impedes their social mobility and their capacity to overcome such challenges. In spite of the seeming odds, there are success stories and one such story is the skipper of the Kenyan national soccer team, Dennis Oliech, who currently plays professional football for French division two soccer club, Auxerre. For many of the deprived youth in Kenya, the story of Dennis Oliech, once in their position, represents hope and provides the impetus for greater strides.

For his selfless efforts with the youth in both Kenya and Canada, James has received numerous national recognitions in magazines, TV programs and radio shows. In 2011, he graced the cover page of the groundbreaking Canadian Immigration magazine and recently, in April 2012, he was included in the impressive list of guest speakers at Simon Fraser University program on "Engaging Diaspora in Development." As part of the program, his work was featured in the "Diaspora Voices" book written by the university.

Additionally, James received an award called "Canadians Living Me to We" under the social action category which was presented by

the Free the Children and Canadian Living Magazine.

In furtherance of his work, YIC recently finalized a partnership with one of Canada's foremost universities, the University of British Columbia, through their International Service Learning program "Go Global." The program seeks to send UBC students to the Dagoretti community in Kenya not only to gain global experience and perspective, but also to engage in sustainable programs and youth development in an effort to build capacity.

In the next few years, James hopes he can dedicate one hundred percent of his time to the youth, but acknowledges the challenges of funding which is desperately needed to continue his interventionist programs. "I hope I can do this fulltime, but I have to be realistic," he noted. When asked of the future of his work, particularly, in Kenya, he stated with seemingly youthful exuberance, "I want to establish an excellence centre equipped with a library, training room and computer lab."

However, he was quick to add that such could only materialize with the support of donors, well-wishers and the relevant organizations in Kenya and around the globe.

For all his successes with the youth in Canada and Kenya, James has no one else but his lovely wife and partner in this noble venture, Janine Kamau, to thank for her dedication, passion for the youth and unsurpassed commitment to this noble endeavor.

For more information on James Kamau and his work, visit the organization website [youthinitiativecanada.com/](http://youthinitiativecanada.com/)



**Above:** James recognizing a youth participant in the baseball program. **Below:** James with some of the young players at a baseball field



# How to Get Canadian Experience

**A**re you new to Canada, or thinking of immigrating here for a job? You should know that employers here might ask if you have "Canadian work experience." This may sound like an odd question. There you are, coming from outside our country. You may have years of work experience and proper credentials from your homeland. Yet that may not be enough to convince Canadian employers of your worth. So what is "Canadian experience" and how can you get it (or get around it)? Read on for more.

## What Do Employers Mean By "Canadian Experience?"

According to Jeffrey Lee, Employment Specialist /Practicum Coordinator at CDI College in Burnaby, British Columbia, "Employers look for Canadian workplace experience so that employees are familiar with workplace culture, social cues, and expectations." Since different cultures may have different ways of handling employment, offers advice. "Many recent immigrants can start by volunteering with various charitable organizations, offering their expertise for a variety of projects. "As well, Lee recommends attending a professional mentoring group where skilled immigrants are paired with local professional peers, to talk about how to prepare for entry into their desired occupation. One such program in

B.C. is from MOSAIC. He also suggests volunteering at businesses related to your profession, if they are open to this. Peter Dudka suggests connecting with local agencies in Canada that offer free employment assistance to immigrants. "Through our agency, for example," says Dudka, "we offer advanced English classes, work placements in Canadian companies, interview preparation courses and networking events with local employers.

If you happen to live in Quebec, you can get Canadian experience working in something called a Practice Firm. These are specially made businesses that only interact with one another. No actual money or salaries are involved. Practice Firms are training facilities that let you do specific jobs as if for real. There are 30 of these Firms in Quebec, and one in Ontario. A list of these is available at the Canadian Practice Firms Network (CPFN).

## Taking A Lower Level Job To Get "Canadian Experience"

To get your start in Canada, you may want to consider taking a lower level job here than you are used to. It could be quicker for you to get initial employment that pays less. While it may be a step down, it translates into Canadian experience. The truth is that this is a common approach for a good percentage of newcomers to Canada. However, be careful - **Continued on page 21**

## 5 WAYS TO NETWORK IN CANADA

Staying Connected Could Be the Key to Your Professional Success

**O**nline social networking may capture the lion's share of attention nowadays, but the strongest bonds among people are still based on relationships established in the offline, physical world. How many friends on Facebook are your legitimate "friends"? When was the last time you contacted someone you met offline, instead of online? I guarantee you keep in touch with your offline contacts more because you have a physical connection with them instead of an electronic one! And when it comes to garnering the attention of corporate recruiters, you're far more likely to score an interview if the hiring manager has previously met with you in person rather than through a Facebook request or a LinkedIn referral.

You may feel anxious putting yourself out there, but taking the leap is crucial to your job search and overall career success. The more competitive the job market, the more aggressively you must expand your professional network – and the less you should rely on LinkedIn and Facebook to do the heavy lifting for you. Remember that executive recruiters receive hundreds of LinkedIn Invitations from people looking for jobs. One of the best ways to stand out in a cluttered online world is to get offline and meet face to face with the people in your online social network. This way, instead of being one of hundreds (or thousands) of online invitations, you become a name and face.

Here are five steps to forging a real-world connection with those who can help you:

### (1) Reconnect with your current network and keep them close.

The easiest way to meet new people is to leverage your current network. We

all have networks, including our friends, family and acquaintances. Get up from your computer and start going to lunches and professional or social events in your industry. Attend these events with friends so you can be introduced to people with whom you wouldn't normally be in contact. This is especially useful when your friends have the same networking goals in mind and want to pool their effort.

### (2) Take online contacts offline stay well connected with them

If you already have an online following — on your blog, Facebook, Twitter or an online discussion forum — then you can tap into those communities to start meeting people offline. This is especially useful if you're introverted and you're looking to meet with peers you know already online. By meeting people offline, you'll build a stronger network online and vice versa.

### (3) Volunteer with a nonprofit organization within your city

There are so many nonprofit organizations out there, and if you're passionate about getting involved in one, all it takes is an e-mail or a phone call. It's important that you join the right organization so that you stay involved and meet the right people. For instance, if you're looking to promote new education and workforce strategies to low-income youth and adults, you might want to join Jobs for the Future (jff.org). If you're looking to help raise money to stop poverty, then perhaps you'd join Kiva (kiva.org). There is at least one nonprofit organization that aligns to your underlying values and career aspirations. Volunteering your time opens your mind, and your network, to new Possibilities.



### (4) Create remarkable business cards, and use them

If your business card is thin and boring, consider investing in new ones. Business cards can be cut into many shapes and sizes. A lot of companies offer different materials and formats as well. If your business cards include your own picture, people will remember your face after they meet you. It will also make you appear more personable in a networking situation. Don't put too much contact information on your cards because people will typically just Google your name. Stick with

your preferred method of contact, a Web site or blog URL, a fancy design and cut, and your picture.

### (5) Start a networking group

If you want to expand your network, start your own group, name it, and invite other people who would be interested. By being the group organizer, you're immediately positioned as a leader people will want to speak with and get to know. It not only looks good on your resume that you're involved in a special-interest group, but it will give you the opportunity to meet "the right people".

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# Is Nollywood A Billion Dollar Industry?

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The digital revolution in filmmaking over the last decade has given birth to an African success story: Nollywood – Nigeria’s answer to Hollywood, uses low-cost digital filmmaking and editing to tell local stories — in the process making money and creating thousands of jobs. This do-it-yourself (DIY), straight-to-DVD and video market has in just 13 years ballooned into a US \$250 million-a-year industry employing thousands of people. In terms of the number of films produced each year, Nollywood is now in third place behind India’s Bollywood and America’s Hollywood. Despite rampant pirating of DVDs and poor copyright controls, directors, producers, actors, stars, vendors and technicians are all making a living in this fast-growing industry.

The power of creative industries to create jobs and wealth has been a focus of UNESCO, through its Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity. UNESCO has been in the forefront in helping African countries re-shape their policies to take cultural industries into consideration. The promotion of cultural industries also has been incorporated into the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). What is particularly attractive about Nollywood to the poor in the South is its rough-and-ready approach to filmmaking: combining low-cost digital cameras and film editing software on personal computers, with small budgets and fast turn-around times. Films are made on location using local people.

These factors make getting into filmmaking accessible and within reach of more people. Nollywood grew out of frustration, necessity and crisis: in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Nigerian cities became crime hotbeds. People were terrified to go out on the streets, and this led to the closing down of many movie theatres. Desperate for entertainment at home – and unsatisfied with foreign imports from India and the West – Nigerians turned to telling their own stories to stave off the boredom of staying in. The film credited with sparking off the industry is 1992’s *Living in Bondage* – a huge financial hit credited with raising the level of professionalism and production values in Nigerian cinema. Now, between 500 and 1,000 feature-length movies are made each year, selling well across the continent of Africa. Average productions take 10 days and cost around US \$15,000 ([www.thisisnollywood.com](http://www.thisisnollywood.com)). Nollywood stars are famous throughout Africa – and Nigeria culturally dominates West Africa just as the US does the world. It is estimated there are 300 producers and that 30 titles go to shops and market stalls every week. On average, a film sells 50,000 copies: a hit will sell several hundred thousand. With each DVD costing around US \$2, it is affordable to most Nigerians and very profitable for the producers. “These are stories about Africa, not someone else’s,” well-known actor Joke Silva told the Christian Science Monitor. Focused on Africa, the films’ themes revolve around AIDS, corruption, women’s rights, the occult, crooked cops and prostitution. They do so well because they speak directly to the lives of slum-dwellers and rural villagers. “We are telling our own stories in our way, our Nigerian way, African way,” said director Bond Emeruwa. “I cannot tell the white man’s story. I don’t know what his story is all about. He tells his story in his movies. I want him to see my stories too.” - Continued on P. 25

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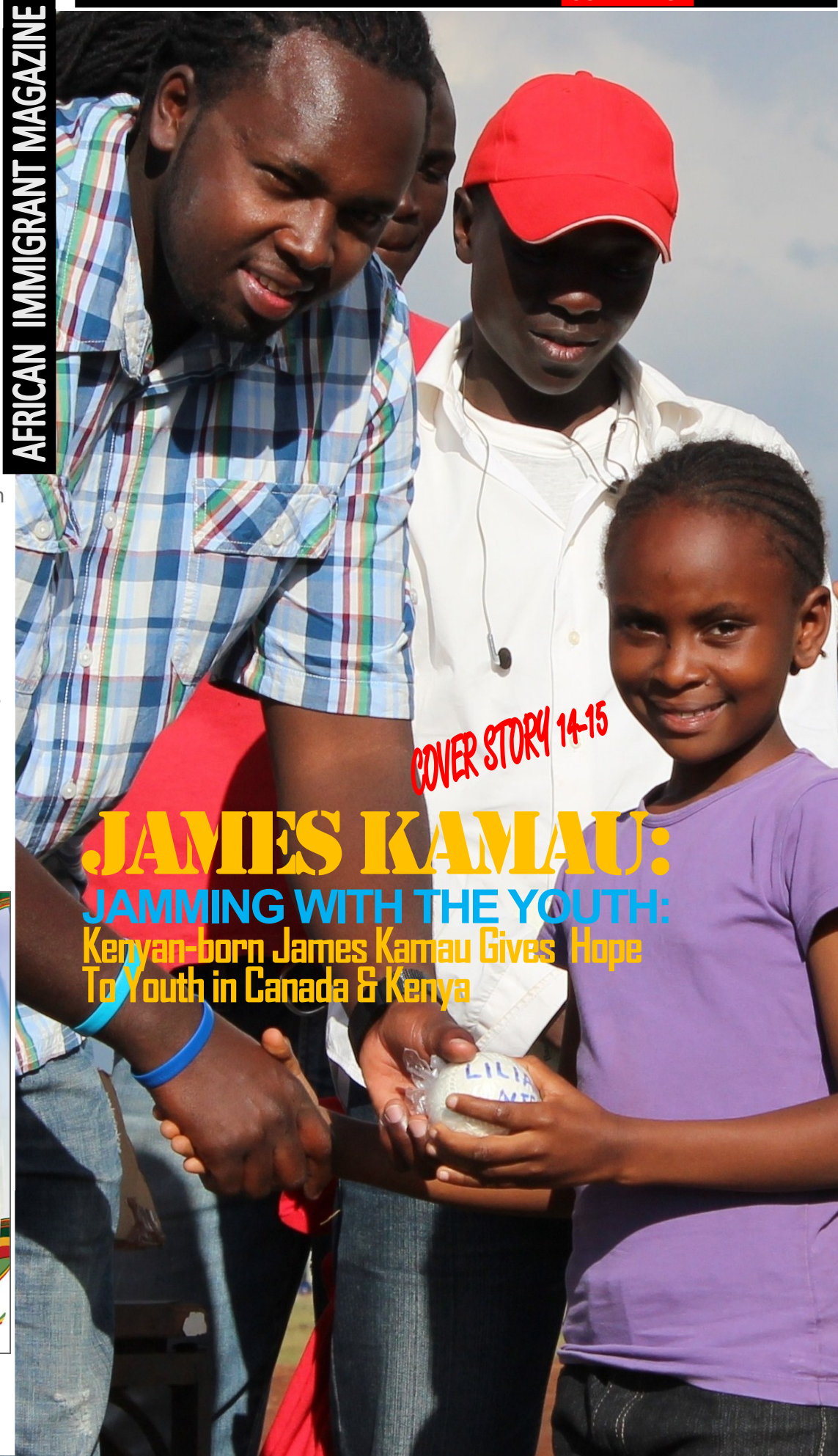
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COVER STORY 14-15  
**JAMES KAMAU:**  
**JAMMING WITH THE YOUTH:**  
**Kenyan-born James Kamau Gives Hope To Youth in Canada & Kenya**

## Immigration System: Kenney Promises Transformation by 2013

Canada's immigration system will become fast, flexible and responsive to labour market, with proposed 'just-in-time' application processing system coming in to effect in 2013, promises Citizenship Minister Jason Kenney. The Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) also expects to lift the current pause in the

federal skilled worker applications next year, when the new selection criteria would take effect. "Combined with previous actions taken to manage the backlog ... by the end of 2013 we will be able to process new applications as they are received ... and aimed to process them in less than a year," Minister Kenney said, making the announcement at a press conference held in IBM office downtown Toron-

to, on Friday, Nov. 2. Minister Kenney also told the media that the CIC will admit up to 55,300 persons — including their spouses and dependents — in the FSW category in the coming year. He noted that the FSW applications received to date are expected to be cleared by the end of 2014. The minister insisted that immigration backlogs are "detrimental to our ability to attract the world's top talent."

TO SEND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — EMAIL PUBLISHER@AFRICANIMMIGRANT.CA

## ON THE FLY

### IMMIGRANT FOCUS

## Immigrant Exhibit Opens at the Museum of Vancouver



ver, the exhibit opens Oct. 18, 2012, and runs until Jan. 6, 2013. Through interviews and portraits, this exhibit brings to life personal stories of immigration. A partnership project with Immigrant Services Society of B.C. and the museum, the exhibit highlights the role that ISS of BC has played in the last 40 years supporting newcomers to Vancouver as they build new lives in Canada. The exhibit includes a video detailing the stories of six immigrants to B.C. from

various parts of the world and an overview of the province's immigration history presented on display panels. Shortly, an accompanying moderated free public dialogue will take place, featuring a diverse panel of practitioners, researchers and innovators, who will lead a discussion on how immigration has shaped Vancouver's evolution

A new exhibit at the Museum of Vancouver is spotlighting the story of immigrants in the city. Called *Untold Stories: History of Immigrants in Vancouver*

## African IMMIGRANT

CANADA'S PREMIER AFRICAN MAGAZINE

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### TIT BITS

## — JOBS —

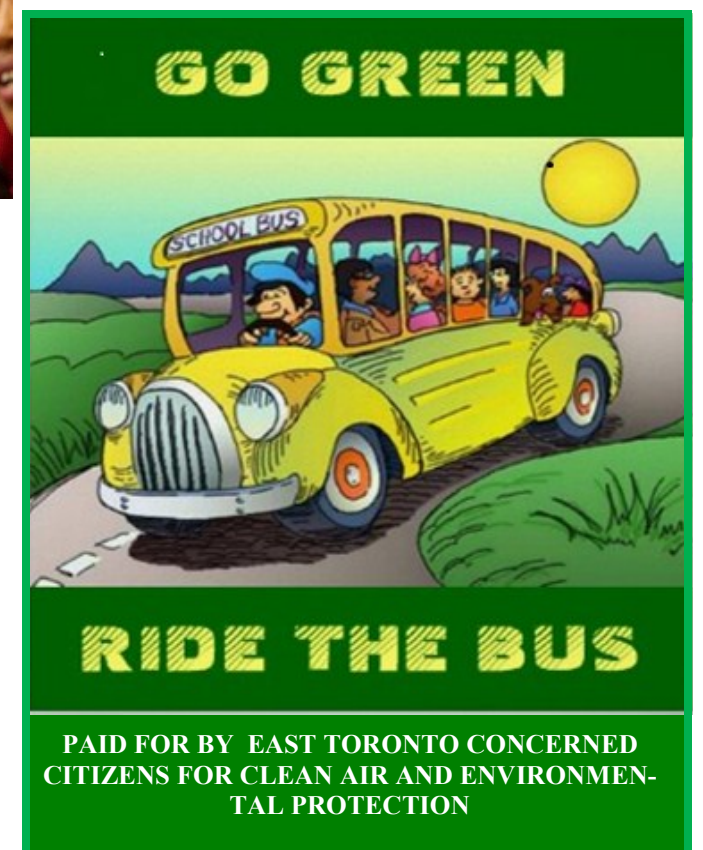
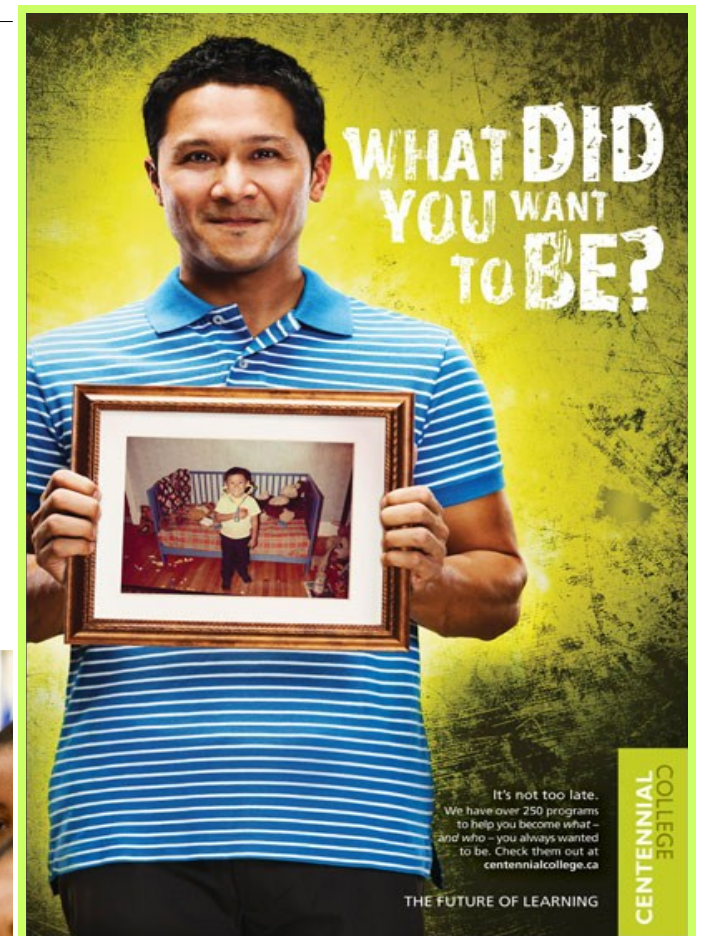
## Finding employment, biggest challenge for newcomers, reveals survey

"Finding employment, missing family and making friends are the top three difficulties faced by newcomers to Canada, according to the findings of an HSBC Bank of Canada survey."



A recent study has revealed that, while Canada offers a friendly reception along with quality of life and natural beauty, the arrival and adjustment process is not without its challenges. Finding employment, missing family and making friends are the top three difficulties faced by newcomers to Canada, according to the findings of an HSBC Bank of Canada survey. The survey, *New to Canada* released today, Nov. 1 polled over 600 new immigrants across the country regarding their relocation experience. The survey participants also cited Montrealers, healthcare professionals and banks/financial institutions as the most welcoming of newcomers — and 84 percent of new immigrants would

recommend immigrating to Canada to family and friends, according to the findings. Finding employment (62 percent), missing family (42 percent) and making friends (34 percent) were the top three difficulties faced. "When reflecting on their experiences in settling their finances, respondents confessed they found it hard to understand Canadian investment options, secure approvals for loans, and obtain credit cards," according to a press release. When asked to share one piece of financial advice with other new immigrants, many said it would be to "find a bank that enables you to manage your money both in and outside of Canada."

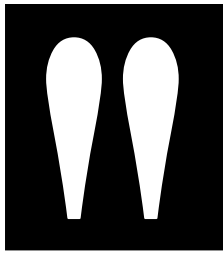


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Canada's long-delayed new electronic passports will feature extra security embedded into watermarks of historical and sports scenes as well as a computer chip and a five - or 10-year option. Foreign Minister John Baird unveiled the new images for the now-blank inside pages of Canadian passports Friday at a mid-morning news conference. "The new ePassport will be more reflective and representative of who we are as Canadians," he said. The images range from the Grey Cup and Stanley Cup superimposed over children playing pond hockey to Halifax Harbour to a Prairie scene to the Fathers of Confederation.

The ePassports will also include a computer chip, technology already used in 95 other countries. Canadians will be able to renew their passports for five years for \$120 or 10 years for \$160, Passport Canada has said. Current passports are renewable every five years. Children will still be eligible only for a five-year passport. Fees for adult passports now range from \$82 to \$97. For those applying outside of Canada, the fee skyrockets to \$190 for a five-year passport — up from \$97 — and \$260 for the document that would expire in 10 years, The Canadian Press reported. By comparison, it currently costs \$135 to apply for a new passport in By comparison, it currently costs \$135 to apply for a new passport in the United States, \$25 less for a renewal. An adult passport in the

## New Canadian Passport to Feature Historical Images, Computer Chip and 10-year Option



The ePassports will also include a computer chip, technology already used in 95 other countries. Canadians will be able to renew their passports for five years for \$120 or 10 years for \$160, Passport Canada has said.

United Kingdom costs the equivalent of about \$117. The first five-year ePassports will be available in the first three months of 2013 at "select locations," Baird said. Both the five- and the 10-year passports will be available across Canada by early summer. The International Civil Aviation Organization adopted new standards for electronic passports in 2003 in the heightened security world created after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States. The biometric information and photography about each individual passport-holder buried in the computer chip

would be scanned by a machine using technology similar to Radio Frequency Identification chips in retail merchandise. About 55,000 Canadian passports are lost or stolen each year, Passport Canada has said. When Ottawa first promised the new passports by 2011, the government said the longer shelf life was because they would be "harder to forge." The Star reported two weeks ago that the new passport covers with the embedded computer chip will be made by a European company rather than the Ontario firm that has long held the contract. (The star)

## Canada Introduces New Asylum System

"Bogus asylum seekers who abuse our generous system at great expense to taxpayers, will be removed much faster."

**O**n December 15, 2012, CIC introduced a new asylum system designed to overcome the limitations and vulnerabilities of its predecessor. In an attempt to make the process of asylum provision "faster and fairer", authorities will be initiating new measures aimed at providing "genuine refugees fleeing persecution....more protection more quickly," said Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney, adding that "bogus asylum seekers who abuse our gener-

ous system at great expense to taxpayers, will be removed much faster." Originally included in the Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act of 2012, the new system will continue the existing process of granting eligible refugees a hearing at the independent Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB). However, under the new framework, the average waiting period is expected to be reduced from the present 600 days to 60 days or less. In addition, most applicants will have access to a newly-created Refugee Appeal Division (RAD), which

will have the authority to reverse a negative IRB decision in the presence of compelling evidence. Furthermore, the new system will allow authorities to remove failed asylum claimants from Canada within a year of their final IRB decision. At present, this process takes 4.5 years. The Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act of 2012 is expected to save provinces and territories \$ 1.6 billion over five years in social assistance and education costs. (Canadian Visa)

## EDUCATING AFRICAN WOMEN

### The Only Way to Sustainable Farming



(By Bernard Appiah, Scidev.net)

The successful implementation of sustainable agricultural practices (SAPs) in Sub-Saharan Africa is linked to improvements in women's education, according to a study. SAPs are often touted as a solution to land degradation, low agricultural productivity and widespread poverty in the region. The new study is the result of research conducted in rural Ethiopia that aimed to identify interdependent factors affecting the adoption of SAPs in Sub-Saharan Africa and their impact on incomes and livelihoods. It was carried out by a team from the School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. The researchers analyzed a household survey - conducted between October and December 2010 - of 900 farm households working on 4,050 farming plots in three maize-growing regions of Ethiopia. They identified the factors that influence the adoption of three key SAPs: using improved seeds; conservation tillage; and maize-legume crop rotation systems. They also compared

how incomes were affected by the three different practices. "We found that each year of education increases the probability of adopting more than two of the SAPs by 12 per cent," says Hailemariam Teklewold, the lead author and a research fellow at the University of Gothenburg. "The impact of women's education was relevant in both male-headed and female-headed households," Teklewold adds. The study says that, "in almost all cases, the adoption of a combination of SAPs provides more maize income compared to Farmers who adopted all three practices earned the larg-

est net income of 5,580 birr (around US\$300) per hectare per year, but those who adopted only one of the practices - intercropping, conservation tillage, or improved seeds - earned about US\$100, US\$128 and US\$154 per hectare per year, respectively. Solomon Jemal, an agronomist at the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, says the study provides concrete evidence of the importance of mainstreaming gender issues in SAP efforts in Africa. He tells SciDev.Net: "The study's findings should make stakeholders consider the important role of women in adopting SAPs, and of designing int-

erventions that will be favourable to women smallholder farmers." John Achieng', an agronomist at the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, says the findings relating to women's education are highly relevant to Sub-Saharan Africa. "About 70 to 80 per cent of farming activities in Sub-Saharan Africa are done by women, and, because girls drop out of school faster than boys, governments should ensure more women are given an education," says Achieng'. The higher one's level of education, the higher the rate of adoption of a technology, he says. But Achieng' warns that implementing conservation agriculture also poses some challenges that are unfavourable to poorer farmers. For example, yields are usually lower for the first two years after implementation, although they pick up considerably in subsequent years. Also, "many smallholder farmers grow crops and keep livestock, and will prefer to give crop residues to their livestock rather than keep them as SAPs require."

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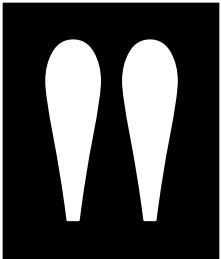
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# TFSA OR RRSP CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

You can find out how much you are allowed to contribute to your RRSP



AN RRSP—REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVING PLANS— MEANT FOR RETIREMENT. FUNDS CAN BE WITHDRAWN SOONER— UNDER THE HOME BUYER’S AND LIFELONG LEARNING PLANS. “

## Get Informed Before Making Your Decision

It’s the battle of the acronyms — RRSP or TFSA. They’re both savings vehicles that can help with your tax bill, but which one reigns supreme will depend on your own individual situation. In ideal circumstances there would be no showdown — Canadians would sock money away into both, experts say. But circumstances aren’t always ideal. Maybe it’s a quality of life decision or maybe it’s truly just there is not the availability of income or assets to contribute to both,” said John Tracy, senior vice president of retail, savings and investing at TD Canada Trust. “Both is a great answer when you can do it.” An RRSP — a registered retirement savings plan — is, as its name suggests, meant for retirement. Funds can be withdrawn sooner — under the Home Buyer’s and Lifelong Learning plans, for example — but generally this is money that won’t be touched until your golden years. TFSAs—tax-free savings accounts — are more flex-

ible. They can be used to save for retirement, to be sure. But because that money is easier to access in a TFSA than it would be in an RRSP, it can serve many other purposes. “It’s starting to pick up a lot more popularity with the younger generation who is not quite geared to thinking about the retirement,” said Cleo Hamel, a senior tax analyst at H&R Block. “They’re more along the lines of thinking of today and what they have planned in their own life — getting married, buying a home.” You can find out how much you are allowed to contribute to your RRSP on last year’s notice of assessment from the Canada Revenue Agency — 18 per cent of that year’s income to a maximum of around \$23,000. Unused contribution room from previous years gets carried over. The deadline for making a contribution for the 2012 tax year is March 1, so it’s really the only option Canadians have available now to ease last year’s tax bill — RRSPs give the benefit of a tax deduction. — Continued on page 11

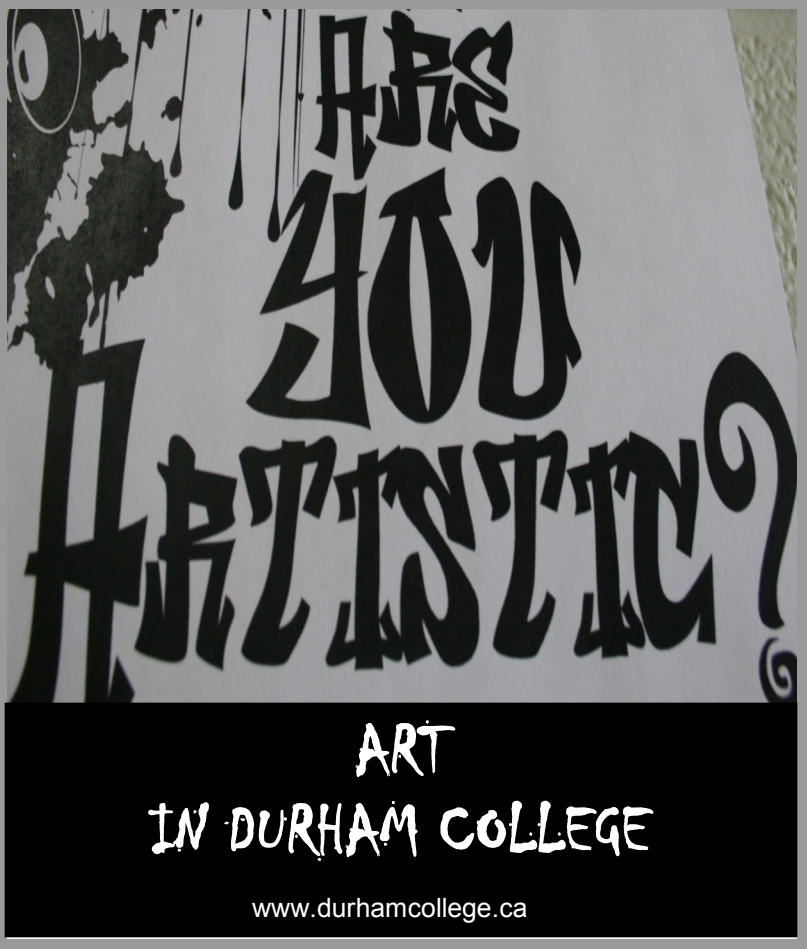
# Malawi: Joyce Banda - Between Saving the Economy and Winning Elections

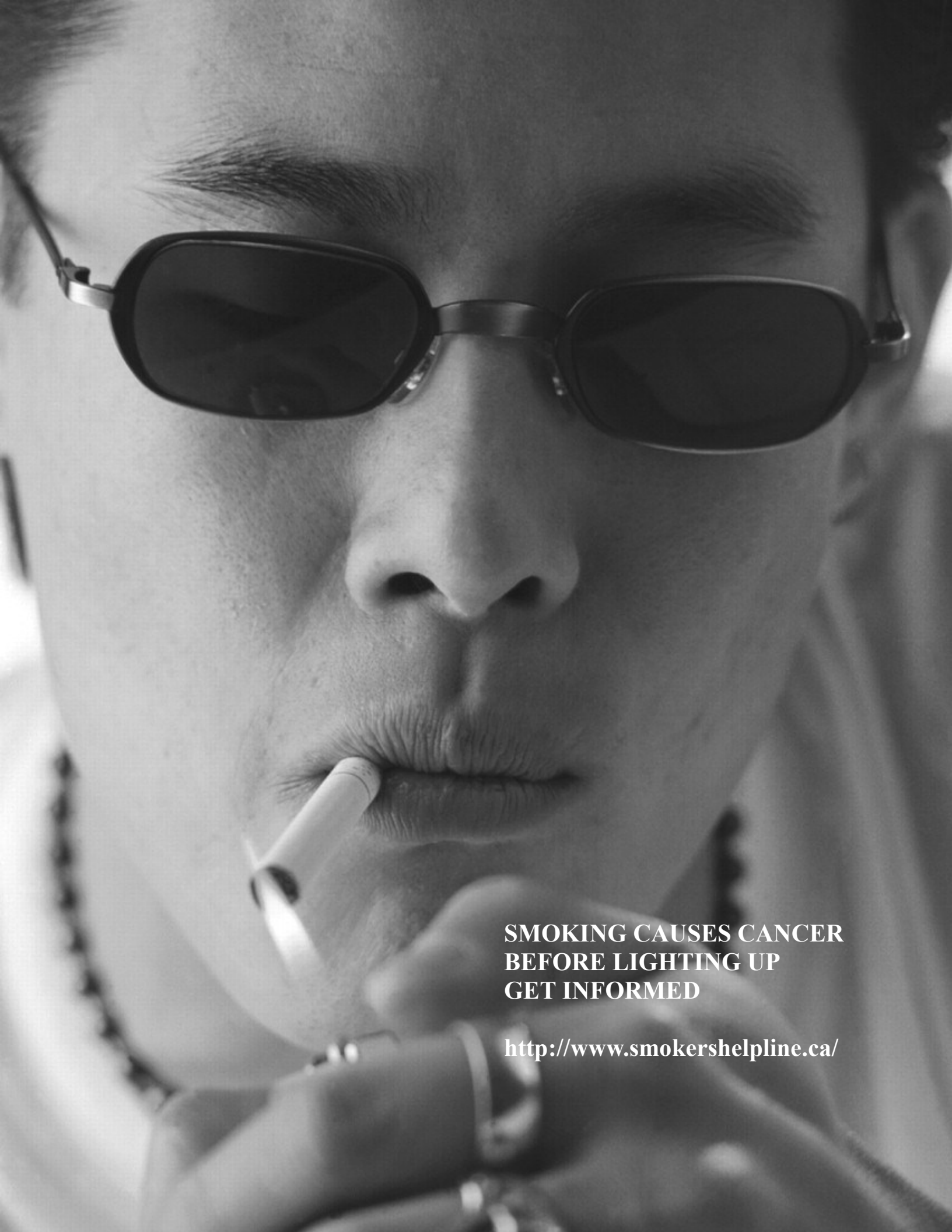
BY JIMMY KAINJA

Last October the president of Malawi, Joyce Banda, told European Union delegates in Brussels that she was ready to sacrifice her political career for economic reforms in the country. Banda was mainly referring to a 40 percent currency devaluation that her administration implemented a few weeks after its ascendency to power on 7th April last year. This followed

the sudden death of her predecessor, Bingu wa Mutharika, who succumbed to a heart attack two days earlier. Banda's Brussels statement sounded very patriotic, statesman-like and reminiscent of a great leader - she may yet be any of these. But in this context, the statement underlined a conundrum that has, thus far, been the defining feature of President Banda's leadership. The Malawian economy is almost entirely dependent on grants and donations. Banda has admitted that without outside help the country is in dire straits. Having inherited an economy on the verge of collapse, after being deserted by donors due to Mutharika's poor diplomatic relations, perceived arrogance and deteriorated human rights record, Banda is only too aware of the importance of continuing to keep them sweet. The situation has given donors bargaining power, which has forced Banda to accept their advice, including IMF austerity measures willy-nilly. Banda recently told a Guardian documentary that "if our friends and international partners do not come, if they packed they packed up today and left, we are dead."

The donor prescribed economic measures have not always been popular locally; this is a problem for Banda because she cannot afford to alienate the donors or the people that give her a mandate to govern. She has already witnessed Mutharika's fall from grace after failing to negotiate such a conundrum. Mutharika saw donors walking out on him and died a hated figure at home, to the extent that a section of Malawians celebrated his death - something unheard of in the country's traditions. The problem of having to please two parties whose demands are not always mutual is that eventually something will have to give - hence her "I am ready to sacrifice my political career" assertion. Yet Banda is not sacrificing herself just yet and is fighting hard for her political career. In doing so, she has had to master the art of political doublespeak and would never make a statement like the above whilst in Malawi - where all her speeches are crafted to fit in with her ambition of winning 2014 elections. I previously made a case that the Joyce Banda the world sees may not be the one Malawians know.





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# OSCAR AWARDS: Nollywood is Standing Tall Without Nominations

*Whether Nollywood wins Oscars or not , we will keep watching their movies . We have our AMAA to rate our movies by . Hollywood cannot be best friends with Nollywood because the later snatched away millions of their viewers around the world . The two movie giant houses are worlds apart . Nollywood deals with our everyday situations we face in life while Hollywood is too abstract and theoretical."* **T. Thomas, January 17, 2013.**



By **Emeka Chiakwelu**,  
Founder of AFRIPOP. He  
can be reached at  
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When Hollywood announced its 2013 Oscar Award nominations earlier this month, it was said that many Nollywood stars braved the time difference and were wide awake to hear the nomination row-call. When it came to nominations for Best Foreign Language Films, no single Nollywood or Nigerian movies were nominated. Some of the Nollywood stars were said to be little disappointed by Hollywood for not giving Nollywood its due respect or 'props' as she mightily deserved. Nollywood should recognize that Oscar's Academy Award is in the business of promoting Hollywood and swelling the bank account of its people. Nollywood has been phenomenal, within a span of ten years it has replaced Hollywood as the second largest movie producers, while Bollywood of India continued to take the first place. Nollywood is gradually but steadily becoming a business competitor to Hollywood in Africa, if not beyond. In profitability and superb organizational structure, Hollywood runs supreme.

As noted by Slate: In 2004, “the six major studios—Disney, Fox, Warner Bros., Paramount, Universal, Sony, and their subsidiaries—had total revenues of \$7.4 billion from world box-office sales, \$20.9 billion from world video sales, and \$17.7 billion from world television licensing.” Hollywood is very profitable and entertainment industry gives United States its second largest foreign revenue. And Hollywood cultural influence, as a leverage for soft power cannot be overemphasised. In comparison, “Nigeria’s Nollywood is the third largest film industry worldwide right behind Hollywood in the US and India’s Bollywood. Its filmmakers have mastered the art of producing entertaining popular media with low production costs and high revenue gains. According to Black Enterprise, Nollywood produces more than 2000 moves each year and brings in \$250 million in profit.” as Charlotte Young wrote in Madamenoire.

Nollywood has the potential to be a global juggernaut akin to Hollywood but more work must done in establishing legal frameworks and entertainment infrastructures including copy write laws, protection of intellectual property and adequate distribution centers. First of all, it makes sense to explain how foreign movies are nominated for Oscar awards. The first thing to do is to submit a movie or movies for nominations. Secondly, lobby the Academy Board for selection and when nominated go further and intensify the lobbying to get the voters to support the movie. The later may require hiring a Hollywood agent in order to make it possible. Without any inquiry and probing, I have the hunch that energetic Nollywood film makers will definitely submit movies for consideration.

For now that is good enough for Nollywood for only time will take care of being part of the nominations and winners. Nollywood film will never be selected or win Oscar award unless it has a Hollywood connection and by this I mean financial or monetary interest. Nollywood has not even recognized how powerful she is becoming, for Nollywood poses a business threat to Hollywood especially in Africa and developing nations. What Nollywood did in Africa and beyond was to displace Hollywood by telling the stories average Africans can identify with and not some tinsel-town stories that are quite far away from African experience and cultural make-up. Nollywood has captured the spirit and soul of Africa on a motion picture. The Nollywood is antithetical to the Hollywood early movies that make mockery of Africa by distorting her humanity with comical and disparaging projections.

The Nollywood experience is a resourceful mouthpiece for the old and new Africa - the good, bad, rich, poor, and of course the authentic Africa which is rooted on African perspective. Nollywood stands for something beyond just making movies but a movement that illustrates, defines and captures Africa's sense and sensibility without seeking for permission or apology unlike African polity. The introduction of the category for Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Language Film started in 1956. The much older and established Bollywood has been submitting their movies from 1957 to the present day. With all the movies submitted, Bollywood has only been nominated for three movies and none has ever won.

Nollywood has every attribute just like Hollywood to give it an international acceptance. Nollywood have the glitz, gossip, brains and beauty; and Nollywood stars are gaining name recognition in the world. The works of and faces like Genevieve Nnaji, Nkem Owoh are gaining a growing acceptance in the film world. In nearest future many Nollywood stars will be invited to become part of Hollywood because of the enormous talents, moreover there is money to be made in Nollywood's Nigeria and Africa. It is already happening in the music industry, you have many American musicians collaborating with P Square and D'Banji. With Africa's exploding population and purchasing power, time is on the side of Nollywood. The time is not distant away when Hollywood will beckons Nollywood for collaboration and partnership. Nollywood must be persistence and must not relent on her quest to entertain the world.

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## Comparing the TFSA to the RRSP

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Contributions are not tax-deductible

Contributions can be made until the end of the year in which you turn 71 years of age

Contributions can be made at any time with no age limit (for those 18 years of age and over)

Withdrawals are taxed at your marginal tax rate

Withdrawals are 100% tax-free

1% monthly penalty for over contributions

1% monthly penalty for over contributions

Withdrawals could affect eligibility for income-tested government benefits and credits

Withdrawals will not affect eligibility for federal income-tested government benefits and credits

Unused contribution room is carried forward indefinitely

Unused contribution room is carried forward indefinitely

Withdrawals cannot be returned to the RRSP without using contribution room\*

Withdrawals will be added to contribution room in the following year.

*\* except for repayments of withdrawals under the home buyers' plan or the lifelong learning plan*

Because there's a penalty for withdrawing from an RRSP before retirement, tapping those funds is really a "last resort," said Tracy. Another deterrent is that once that money is withdrawn, that contribution room is gone for good most of the time. "In some cases, it makes more sense to borrow money than access your RRSP because the penalty in tax would be so significant," he said. From a psychological standpoint, the difficulty in withdrawing from an RRSP can be a good thing for those keen on letting their retirement savings grow. "I think for real retirement savings, feeling like you've locked it in a bit more in RRSPs and leaving it there and letting it compound for a longer period of time can really be quite beneficial," said Dennis Tew, chief financial officer at Franklin Templeton Investments Corp. On the other hand, you can take out money from your TFSA any time without being dinged by the tax collector and that contribution room is restored the following year. The deadline for contributions is the end of the calendar year,

so that ship has sailed when it comes to 2012. For 2013, the limit for contributions has moved up from \$5,000 to \$5,500 to account for inflation. Like with RRSPs, spare contribution room from previous years is available in the future. Whether it be an RRSP or TFSA, the money contributed can be invested in mutual funds, stocks, bonds and GICs. Since RRSP funds are taxed upon withdrawal and TFSA contributions are not, it's also helpful to think about whether or not you foresee yourself being in a higher or lower tax bracket when you use that money than you are today. Another factor to consider is what effect RRSP funds will have on Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement and other government benefits. At times, it might make sense to divert some money into a TFSA. RRSP or TFSA — whichever one Canadians pick, Tracy said the most important thing is that they do something. "Create a habit of saving. Start small. Don't get overwhelmed," he said. (Globe & Mail)

### TRUE or FALSE:

- ⇒ TFSAs are a type of high-interest savings account, False?
- ⇒ You get a tax refund when you contribute to a TFSA, False?
- ⇒ You can contribute up to \$5,000 a year to a TFSA, True
- ⇒ If you don't use your contribution room this year, you can use it next year, True
- ⇒ You have to pay taxes on money you withdraw from a TFSA, False?
- ⇒ You can take money out of a TFSA and put it back in later, True
- ⇒ If your investments decline in value, you can add more money to the account, False?
- ⇒ You can only have one TFSA account, False?
- ⇒ TFSAs are a great way to save for short-term savings goals like buying a new car, True
- ⇒ TFSAs are the best way to save for retirement, False?
- ⇒ You can use your TFSA as loan collateral, True
- ⇒ You can dump a losing stock into your TFSA to claim a capital loss, False?



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The big brands – Sony, Panasonic, JVC and Canon – all produce cameras capable of high-definition digital filmmaking and these have become the staple tools of this filmmaking revolution. More and more, the films are capitalising on the large African diaspora around the world, on top of Africa's large internal market. And this is offering a step-up into the global marketplace for Nigerian directors and producers. The Nollywood phenomenon has been documented in the documentary *This is Nollywood*, directed by Franco Sacchi, a teacher from the Center of Digital Imaging Arts at Boston University. The prospects for the industry are only looking up: the Nigeria in the Movies project has been launched to help grow the industry, establish standards, improve distribution and broaden its international appeal and awareness. It also offers filmmaking grants for neophyte filmmakers. Of course, filmmaking can be a tricky business: authorities in largely Muslim northern Nigeria have imposed 32 restrictions on the local film industry

— nicknamed “Kannywood” after the city of Kano. A six-month ban lost the industry US \$29 million and put thousands out of work: a sign of the economic importance of this DIY filmmaking business. The message is clear: filmmakers need to be sensitive to the cultural norms of the communities in which they work. Kannywood, started in 1992, has 268 production companies and 40 editing studios, employing over 14,000 people. Adem Williams is one Nigerian director who is getting an international audience. He spends about US \$40,000 on films that take two weeks to shoot. He has already secured an American release of a comedy, *Joshua*. Another director, Tunde Kelani, is regularly featured at international film festivals, where Nollywood screenings are more common. And some, like young director Jeta Amata, believe Nollywood's cheap, fast-production, DIY approach has a lot to teach Hollywood, with its expensive filmmaking and ponderous production.

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