

Unleashing the Latent Potential of Young People in Africa: The Example of Dalumuzi Happy Mhlanga and Salathiel Ntakirutimana

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Abstract

This article tells the story of two young people, Dalumuzi Happy Mhlanga from Zimbabwe and Salathiel Ntakirutimana from Burundi, to show how they have defied the lack of structured opportunities and made an impact on the development of their home countries and even made a mark globally. The intention is to highlight the potential of young people and to show how this might be unleashed when they are allowed to innovate and flourish. The article begins by providing a contextual definition of youth from global and African perspectives, followed by an insight into youth participation. I proceed to tell the stories of the two young people's activities in school, at university, in their home communities and during their two years at Waterford Kamhlaba, United World College of Southern Africa in Swaziland. My telling of their stories is based on their responses to a questionnaire I emailed them in September 2013 and on their postings on social media and interviews. The discussion identifies Dalumuzi and Salathiel as social entrepreneurs and servant leaders with an enlightened vision of community development and the empowerment of young people. They demonstrate the interrelationship between youth empowerment and sustainable national development. The article concludes with a message for African leaders and institutions around the world that it is essential to invest creatively in young people as they can be powerful catalysts for African development.

Keywords: youth potential participation and empowerment; Dalumuzi Happy Mhlanga; Salathiel Ntakirutimana; Africa; case study; social entrepreneur; sustainable national development



Introduction

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2017) describes youth as “a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community.” For operational purposes, UNESCO varies its definition depending on the context, particularly when implementing local community programmes. In African countries, youth is defined as “every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years” in accordance with the African Youth Charter (African Union [AU] 2006, 3).

Young people can be perceived differently: from a positive perspective they can be seen as, for example, responsible, creative, transformational agents; from a negative perspective they can be seen as, for example, immature, ignorant and in need of guidance to protect and keep them in their place. In some African countries young women in particular are regarded as children who should not be heard. At the same time, young people are hailed as the future of the nation and leaders of tomorrow. In reality, they can also be the leaders of the present, with Ashish Takar, Africa’s youngest billionaire, prominent in this respect.

Interest in the development of young people is manifested in the 10 priority areas set out in the United Nations (UN) World Program of Action for Youth (UN 2010), namely, education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure activities, girls and young women, and youth participation. On a more optimistic note, the AU promotes the welfare of young people through the African Youth Charter, born partly out of the conviction “that Africa’s greatest resource is its youthful population and that through their active and full participation, Africans can surmount the difficulties that lie ahead” (AU 2006, 1). Further impetus for developing nations to pay attention to young people came in the form of the UN Millennium Development Goals, the Youth Employment Programme formed in 2005 by the UN, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank (ILO 2016), and the UN Expert Group Meeting on Global Priorities for Youth.

Such commitments, necessary and laudable as they may be, need to be honoured. Based on the success of two young people, I argue that more opportunities must be created for young people to contribute as social entrepreneurs to the development of their countries.

Youth Participation

In African society, youth participation has traditionally depended on the blessing of authority and has been confined by societal structures. The opinions of the youth have been of minor importance and their efforts of interest only when it suited adult authority.

In politics, youth participation can be viewed in many forms. Young people have been at the forefront of radical national politics and, especially in Africa, in liberation struggles. They have also been used as cannon fodder by older leaders. In recent years we have seen Julius Malema, former leader of the ANC Youth League in South Africa, first being used and then cast out by President Zuma. Brainwashed young people at Border Gezi Training Camps in Zimbabwe have been used to guarantee election victories for President Mugabe (Rupiya 2005). Child soldiers have been used in the DRC, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

This article aims to promote a powerful alternative, which is to harness the instincts of young people to serve their community through social entrepreneurship. Sader and Weideman (2004, 5) offer an optimistic perspective of youth participation in South Africa where “young people see more ‘informal’ mechanisms of participation as the best way to do their bit for their community.” They stress that informal participation should be construed as a demonstration of “deep involvement with, and commitment to, their communities and the issues that are important to them” while noting that “this level of involvement often goes unnoticed and the picture that is painted of youth participation is often bleak.” Especially in using emerging technologies and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, young people are finding ways in which they can impact on their communities by creating their own spaces outside politics and traditional civic involvement. To some extent, social networks are even credited with unleashing the involvement of young people in the Arab Spring of 2011. The extraordinary activities of young people do occasionally come to prominence, as in the May 2013 edition of the *New African* in which 50 trailblazers were acknowledged by Otas (2013, 52) for “breaking new ground and making Africa proud and propelling it into a future of great hope.” Most of the trailblazers were between the ages of 15 and 35.

According to Mashiya (quoted by Sader and Weideman 2004), successful youth participation involves three elements: actively taking part in shaping their own destinies; being committed to whichever societal sphere they are involved in; and being involved in decision-making processes. Ngcobo (2004, 11) defines participation as “more than just involvement” and states that:

In order for young people to participate in any given institution, they not only have to be involved in that institution; they also have to be able to influence decision making processes. In any democratic country, young people have the right to form their own opinions and to exercise choices as members of their country and of society.

Dalumuzi Happy Mhlanga and Salathiel Ntakirutimana exemplify how young people with vision and commitment can give life to their communities. The intention of this article is to highlight the roles they are playing locally and even internationally to bring

about social change. In doing so, I also wish to showcase how the nature and quality of a liberal high-school education helped to inspire their vision and develop their sense of agency.

Dalumuzi's Story

Dalumuzi Happy Mhlanga was born in 1988 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. He was educated at Greenfield Primary School in Bulawayo and Mzingwane High School, which offered supportive environments and opportunities to participate in activities such as public speaking, debating and HIV/AIDS counselling. Gaining straight A-grades, he was identified for receiving the Strive Masiyiwa's Joshua Nkomo Scholarship, and he joined Waterford Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa in Swaziland to study for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Waterford has about 55 teachers from 20 countries and 600 students from 50 countries. The students come from wide-ranging socio-economic backgrounds, and about 30 per cent of them are on bursary support. The diversity at this college and its liberal values, with a strong emphasis on personal growth through community engagement, helped to develop Dalumuzi's potential. He became secretary/treasurer of the Student Council, attended Governing Council and learned to lead in a multicultural setting. However, Dalumuzi's influence reached further than that: he helped to initiate an annual careers fair for schools all around Swaziland and wrote a regular newspaper column.

Upon graduating from Waterford in 2008, Dalumuzi qualified for a further scholarship, courtesy of the Shelby Davis Foundation, and was admitted to Harvard. He went on to become a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, majoring in African Studies.

In 2010, Dalumuzi founded the organisation Lead Us Today to teach leadership and entrepreneurship skills to high-school students in Bulawayo, Gweru and Umzingwane in Zimbabwe. Training is given in, for example, adaptive social change and community mobilisation. Young people are sensitised to appreciate that they can, and should, make a difference. The young people who work for the organisation design and implement projects that address real issues. One project works with students in a fashion business to leverage the talent of designers and tailors. The young workers in the organisation develop community gardens, run evening classes, help with high-school canteens and engage in recycling. They have even initiated an educational toy production business that supplies early childhood development centres. The particular support given to "non-book-smart students" addresses growing youth unemployment (Lead Us Today n.d). Dalumuzi's long-term goal is to create a generation of engaged and socially responsible citizens, spearheading development efforts today and for the future.

Dalumuzi's ambition and his achievements belie his modest earlier years. At the age of 15, as a schoolboy in Bulawayo, he suffered from low self-esteem. In an interview he granted after having been identified as one of the senior students who stood out in the

Harvard graduating class of 2013, he recalled having to stand in front of the mirror and mix and match the few clothes he had. According to him, that “really got to my sense of self-worth. As a teenager, clothes and how you look are very important. Then I snapped out of it. I thought, ‘What are you doing? It was not up to you to be born into this family. Look into yourself’.” (Mhlanga 2013a) He convinced himself that his worth was based on his talents and what he could do. He vowed not to be ruled by projected values and expectations.

Dalumuzi has been true to this commitment. As a freshman at Harvard, Dalumuzi, who had a very strong academic record and excellent leadership skills, opted to do what he described as “crazy things” (Mhlanga 2011). First, against all expectations, he chose to major in Social Studies instead of studying in the fields of engineering, medicine, actuarial science, economics, pure science, mathematics and business, which was possible. Secondly, he registered for several master’s level classes in Strategic Management. It did not take long for his professor to recognise his talent. Dalumuzi became a teaching assistant for courses in “exercising leadership.” Not only were his students older than he was but they were also established professionals and included a former government minister. He served as a director of the Leadership Institute, vice-president of the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa and was a student representative on the Harvard Faculty Committee on Public Service. He won the 2011 Harvard Social Innovator Award, co-sponsored by *Forbes* magazine. In 2012, he was named one of ten outstanding young persons of Zimbabwe by Junior Chamber International. In the same year, he was named one of the top global emerging social innovators by American Express and Ashoka. By the time he graduated, Dalumuzi was one of a handful of Harvard seniors showcased in the graduating class of 2013 (Brown 2013; Stanger 2013).

After graduating in 2013, he was invited to attend the UNESCO Forum on Global Citizenship Education in Bangkok, and he founded Africa LEAD, an organisation that focuses on making financial investments and engaging in businesses whose returns and profits are used to fund youth leadership development programmes across Africa. He also helped to host the Africa Business Leadership Summit in Zimbabwe in 2013.

In February 2014, Dalumuzi was joined by Lead Us Today student Phillip Ndaba and facilitator Priviledge Nyathi at the first Global Forum for Youth Leaders in Abu Dhabi. Lead Us Today was one of only four out of about 50 organisations which had their work presented. Further requests have been made for Dalumuzi to share his work and ideas in Bhutan, the United States of America (USA), Germany, the United Kingdom and Swaziland.

As a social commentator, Dalumuzi is passionate about the political, social, economic and educational situation in his country Zimbabwe. Where others see despair and

failure, he sees opportunity and hope. On the eve of Zimbabwe's 2013 election, which was held on 30 July 2013, he wrote on his Facebook profile (Mhlanga 2013b):

For Zimbabwe to secure its future we need our young people to experience a political environment that has an incredible capacity for handling difference in opinion, complexity, nuance and we need politicians who have the curiosity and humility to accept perspectives that challenge, complement and sharpen their own.

His hope is that he will one day have the opportunity to play a leading role in formulating public policy on education in Zimbabwe. He strongly believes that only when young people realise they have the power to shape a democratic society, will real progress be achieved on the African continent.

Salathiel's Story

Salathiel Ntakirutimana was born in 1990 in the midst of the civil war in Burundi, during which he lost his parents. He has only a vague recollection of them through pictures. He experienced the trials and hardships of being an orphan and refugee, having fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As was the case with Dalumuzi, Salathiel's admission into Waterford Kamhlaba United World College in Swaziland was made possible by Strive Masiyiwa, the Zimbabwean Econet Wireless magnate who set up the Capernaum Trust (now the Higher Life Foundation) for orphans. Salathiel's proficiency in English was limited but he immersed himself in the life of the school and was soon able to participate fully in the broader community and to excel academically. The progressive education that Salathiel experienced, being part of a culturally and socio-economically diverse community where students were encouraged to speak their minds and to enact their ideas, provided opportunities for innovation and social activism. He initiated a leadership development forum as well as a weekly forum at a number of schools to discuss and explore the students' values.

The success of these initiatives provided Salathiel with the confidence to focus on social entrepreneurship. He started by helping to found a committee so that his fellow Burundians could have the opportunity to attend a United World College. In the eight months before beginning his undergraduate studies at Harvard, Salathiel also led a team of investigators for the Refugee Education Trust, evaluating the impact that programmes had on the lives of young people returning to Burundi from refugee camps in Tanzania, and he served as a fieldwork officer for the Higher Life Foundation in Burundi.

Whilst at Harvard, Salathiel founded Youth Globe, a non-government organisation (NGO) operating in Burundi, with a presence in the USA and South Korea. Youth Globe is an all-volunteer organisation committed to providing opportunities for young Burundians to create entrepreneurial solutions to pressing community issues. Its vision is to create a generation of Burundians who are well-informed, responsible and

enterprising and who will lead their peers in developing a better Burundi. Activities relate to, for example, education, training in responsible citizenship, innovation and entrepreneurship. A full secondary-school scholarship is available for needy students who demonstrate academic excellence (Youth Globe n.d.). Seed funding is also available to Youth Globe's graduating entrepreneurs to translate their ideas into businesses and social ventures to impact their community. According to Salathiel (Ntakirutimana 2013), Youth Globe had over 100 scholars in its first year (i.e., 2012), and 2 000 young people were involved in its programmes the following two years (2013 and 2014). In the words of the Burundian Assistant Minister of Education, "Youth Globe is poised to be the youth NGO of choice in Burundi" (Nzokirantevye 2014).

Salathiel was co-opted into the Youth Advocacy Group of the UN Secretary General's Education First Initiative, invited onto the Board of International Advisors of United Planet and served as a youth ambassador for the Refugee Education Trust. He was in a global partnership network with Women Thrive Worldwide, which is based in Washington DC, and spoke on Capitol Hill to US policy-makers and NGO leaders about his work with Youth Globe. He met and was involved in advising Ban Ki-Moon and Gordon Brown, was a delegate at UNESCO's Forum on Global Citizenship Education in Bangkok and led a youth leadership camp in Shanghai.

In 2014 Salathiel was appointed a member of the International Board of Advisors for United Planet, and he spoke at the Global Education and Skills Forum in Dubai. Now graduated, back home and starting up a sustainable energy business in Burundi, Salathiel is currently writing an autobiography, titled "An Unpitiful Life."

Discussion

As individuals, both Dalumuzi and Salathiel fit the mould of people described by Bornstein (2007, 1) as social entrepreneurs. Bornstein sees social entrepreneurs as:

creative individuals with fixed determination and an indomitable will to propel the innovation that society needs to tackle its toughest problems. They share the desires of people everywhere to apply their talents in ways that bring security, recognition, and meaning—and to have some fun. Social entrepreneurs align what they care about, what they are good at, and what they enjoy doing—every day—and have real impact.

Dalumuzi and Salathiel took practical action to realise their vision for social change in their community. Because of their doggedness, spirit of service and success, they have been recognised nationally and internationally for the ways in which they have empowered other young people to take responsibility for their lives. Both can be described as "real people doing real things well" (Bornstein 2007, 3). As a result of the activities of their organisations, they have helped to uplift young people by offering effective training that will, in turn, help to develop them into servant leaders who will

grow to “solve social problems on a large scale” (Bornstein 2007, 1). Both are restless people who used their international connections while studying at Harvard to help launch community development in their home countries.

As important as Salathiel’s and Dalumuzi’s education was in their success, social entrepreneurs need not be highly educated or globally recognised. According to Bornstein (2007, 1):

They are not politicians or industrialists—some are doctors, lawyers, and engineers. Others are management consultants, social workers, teachers and journalists. They don’t have to have access to generous scholarships, attend Ivy League institutions, or indeed be young people.

Bornstein (2007) explains that social entrepreneurs are connected in their role as social innovators, have powerful ideas to improve people’s lives and have implemented these ideas across cities, countries, and in some cases, continents. Bornstein further remarks that in spite of the profound effect social entrepreneurs have on society, their function remains poorly understood and under-appreciated. One crucial area where this is visible, Bornstein says, is in the funding of their activities and in the payment of competitive wages commensurate with the good work they do. For funding, both Dalumuzi and Salathiel relied on the goodwill of donors and social networks, many of which they accessed opportunistically whilst at Harvard.

As leaders of their respective NGOs, they have been able to use new grassroots approaches to tackle social ills. They have led their teams from afar by drawing on the cooperation and team spirit of other young people, demonstrating how “action at a distance” can work. By providing access to education, training in entrepreneurship, responsible citizenship and community service, they are empowering young people. They are generating jobs and lifting the burden of unemployment by enabling young people to use their talents to benefit themselves and others. They have forged partnerships with businesses, NGOs, academic institutions and governments. With limited resources, they have reached thousands of young people and impacted positively on their lives. Their work and activities are testimony to the role young people can play in sustainable national development. Their confidence and “can do” attitudes have jolted others to realise the possibility for change and, crucially, that they can be that change themselves.

In preparing this account, I invited Dalumuzi and Salathiel in a questionnaire I emailed to both of them on September 13, 2013 to talk about what made them successful young social entrepreneurs. For Salathiel, the encouraging presence of mentors and the willingness of other young people to join and form a team with him have been crucial. This has helped him to think bigger and beyond himself. His commitment has been to transform the lives of others, just as his own life has been transformed through his

education, sponsored initially by Higher Life Foundation. He says that apart from being innovative, he is naturally optimistic and always works hard to realise his dreams. Salathiel operates with and for others (Ntakirutimana 2013).

Dalumuzi attributes his success to orientating his activities around key values, namely, initiative, integrity, innovation, commitment to purpose as well as sheer hard work, and infusing such values into others. In addition, he believes he has succeeded because of his curiosity and ability to push boundaries, to interrogate his assumptions about the world, business and social enterprise. Another contributing factor is his ability to cooperate and collaborate with others who share his passion and vision. Dalumuzi gives numerous other reasons for his success: the ability to dream, the ability to learn from others, partnerships, humility, supportive teachers, the love to serve others, being forward-looking and, at the same time, being self-critical. Above all he attributes his success to being innovative in creating the change he wants to see in the world and in empowering young people to make a difference in their community. Most significantly, Dalumuzi has the following to say about his success:

I believe the key enablers for what may be perceived as my success are the opportunities to study in some of the world's best institutions. I have received four scholarships since I was 17, and without these I am certain that I would not have had the rich experiences and opportunities that have defined my development. I received the Joshua Nkomo Scholarship from Econet in 2006 to support my education in Zimbabwe; the United World College Scholarship for my education at Waterford Kamhlaba; the Davis United World College Scholarship and Harvard faculty scholarship to fund my studies at Harvard; and the Rhodes scholarship to pursue postgraduate study at the University of Oxford in the UK. I also received seed funding from Harvard to fund Lead Us Today at its early stages. (Mhlanga 2013c)

Youth Empowerment and Sustainable National Development

Dalumuzi's and Salathiel's successes as social entrepreneurs indicate the value of youth empowerment for sustainable national development. In fact, Dalumuzi believes that youth empowerment is an essential *constitutive element* of national development (Mhlanga 2013c). In his words, the key challenge for many African countries in this regard is the following:

What I believe is a key challenge for many African countries is that we have so far not done a great job of planning ... much of our thinking as it relates to national development has been oriented—justifiably at times—around historical injustices, loyalties of the present and short-term gains for various constituents. Such a focus has relegated the role of youth to maintaining the status quo through, for example, their use as cannon fodder to serve the interests of various political formations and, more broadly, older generations. However, in order to leverage the continent's young population and the vast energies it has to offer, we need to think of national development in more

forward-looking ways. We need to put questions such as the following into strong focus: Where do we see our countries in the global economic and geopolitical system in the coming 20, 30, 50, 100 years? What current deficits do we face that threaten our envisioned roles in the global system? How can we empower youth in ways that close such deficits, which limit the potential of our long-term development? Through such questions, we can greatly increase the chances that youth are empowered in ways that contribute to sustained, holistic national development for years to come.

The need to train and empower young people becomes even more pertinent when we consider the AU's projection that three out of four people in Africa will be under 20 years old by 2020. In addition, about 10 million young Africans are reported to arrive each year on the labour market (Organisation of African Youth 2009). Against this background, African countries put their development at risk if young people are not readied to meet real-world challenges. In Salathiel's words, "given their energy, the youth has a potential to serve as a driving force behind their communities' human and economic development, addressing challenges in innovative, cost-effective ways. Ignoring the youth therefore is tantamount to defaulting on the future of African countries" (Ntakirutimana 2013).

How then should governments, ministries and institutions involved with the youth tap into the latent potential of young people?

First, African society has to rid itself of the perception that young people should not be listened to or allowed to participate in decision-making processes. This, according to Mhlanga (2013c), "essentially calls for a shift from tactical, technical solutions to worldview-changing approaches that reflect a profoundly different way of seeing and conceiving of youth." He advises that young people need to be seen within the context of the future of their countries as key investments to secure the future and that young people should not be seen as naïve "objects" used to maintain the status quo. Rather, they should be seen as agents capable of shaping the world and whose energies, talents and time need to be channelled towards securing their own futures. In addition, he states that young people need to be given platforms to experiment with their ideas for the future.

A progressive perspective, such as the one above, will help to unleash the potential of the youth, embolden them and strengthen their capabilities to take on challenge and shoulder responsibility. The following evidence from around the world, cited by Ntakirutimana (2013), attests to the power of young people to contribute to sustainable development:

In the last few years the world has witnessed ground-breaking community projects and businesses championed and led by young people and making sustainable changes in their communities and the world. Companies like Microsoft, Google, Facebook and

many others would have never existed if their then young founders were not supported and empowered to take their initiatives to greater heights.

Secondly, young people need to be actively engaged in government and community leadership to help society to adapt to future needs. Mhlanga (2013c) believes that education should include critical analysis and entrepreneurship, allow present structures to be challenged and encourage new structures to be created. This in turn will stop the prevailing mentality of expecting jobs from government or business. To support this, governments need to offer loans, subsidies and mentoring opportunities to encourage young people to take the risk to develop their vision for the future of their community.

Thirdly, young people on the fringe of society and from poor socio-economic backgrounds should be helped to unleash their potential by giving them access to opportunities that are open to youths from richer backgrounds. Many gestures are in the spirit of doing things *for* and *to* the underprivileged. This kind of conception fundamentally assumes that the underprivileged do not have agency of their own. Mhlanga (2013c) argues for the need to see the underprivileged as intelligent human beings with a particular understanding of the world and with the ability to enrich both their own lives and those of others.

Dalumuzi's and Salathiel's stories provide evidence that education and the provision of meaningful opportunities to practise leadership, social entrepreneurship, responsible citizenship and community development are key factors in unleashing the potential of young people for sustainable development. However, even in countries such as Namibia where a significant percentage of the annual budget is dedicated to education (29% in 2012/2013, up from 22% in 2008/2009), schools rarely provide such opportunities. Shaleyfu and Ngbipandulwa (2012, 6) highlight the frustration in claiming that "despite the sizeable budgetary allocation to the education system, the output of the system does not match the input." They quote from UNESCO's report on the formal education system in Namibia as follows:

Repetition rates remain high, about 18% in primary school with a higher rate for males (22%) than females (14%). About 23% of primary school children drop out, once again with a higher percentage of males (27%) than females (20%). (UNESCO-UIS) 2010

In addition, Shaleyfu and Ngbipandulwa (2012) report that repetition and drop-out rates are higher among groups that are poorer and more marginalised.

In order to tap into the latent potential of young people, governments in Africa should bolster the education curriculum with the introduction of practical social entrepreneurship and leadership development skills. This can be achieved through community service projects at secondary and tertiary levels, based on values that can be mainstreamed into normal lessons at pre-school and primary-school levels. This will

provide young people with opportunities to innovate and to take creative initiatives through extra-curricular and service-orientated activities.

Those who support young people should actively seek out those who are especially talented and give them the educational opportunities to unleash their potential. Such searches should not be restricted to the urban middle class.

On their part, young people should challenge themselves to innovate rather than rely on government or others to provide. Salathiel wishes that young people could be unchained to realise how much potential they have. He offers the following inspirational quote from Zig Ziglar: “You do not have to be great to start but you have to start to be great” (Ntakirutimana 2013).

Mhlanga (2013c) believes that young people need to have the courage and encouragement to experiment with their ideas. According to him, the world is full of uncertainty and one can never be sure of reality. Young people ought not to wait for the right time or perfect set of circumstances to start something. They need to have the courage to take calculated risks, throw caution to the wind and learn from their mistakes about how they can best make an impact. He comments that in a complex world no one has everything figured out and that embracing this reality will sharpen the hunger to learn.

The overall message from both Dalumuzi and Salathiel is of the need to provide young people with meaningful opportunities to try out their ideas. In the words of Dalumuzi:

Education is the key to changing the world—the future of our countries depends largely on how well we invest in young people’s education—and education is NOT only what young people learn at school. It is the constellation of activities, messages, and experiences that young people are exposed to, which prepare them to be responsible and “productive” adult citizens. (Mhlanga 2013c)

Dalumuzi also strongly believes that to truly empower young people, we need to identify those who are really talented, support them with educational and intellectual development and then fund their ideas.

It is also essential to treat young people as individuals rather than as a collective. According to Bornstein (2007, 3),

an important social change frequently begins with a single entrepreneur author: one obsessive individual who sees a problem and envisions a new solution, who takes the initiative to act on that vision, who gathers resources and builds organizations to protect and market their vision, who provides the energy and sustained focus to overcome the

inevitable resistance, and who—decade after decade—keeps improving, strengthening, and broadening that vision until what was once a marginal idea has become a new norm.

In his reflection on why African leaders should begin to accord young people their rightful place in decision-making processes, Ibrahim (2013) opines that Africa is in the middle of a major demographic shift because of its youthful population. He describes this development as a unique advantage, noting that rapid change can only be met with the skills of young people who are equipped to deliver fresh solutions to our problems. He cautions, however, that there is a need to listen to young people, engage with them and provide the education, skills and support they need. He derides the situation where political power lies in the hands of ageing leaders with little knowledge or interest in the younger generation and, sadly, less interest in passing on the reins of leadership. He advises that African leaders should not be afraid to empower the younger generation and should not lock them out of debate and decision-making. In Ibrahim's words, "It's time Africa started listening to our young people, instead of always telling them what to do. It is their potential, after all, which will decide our continent's future. Let's not waste it" (Ibrahim 2013).

Conclusion

Dalumuzi and Salathiel are young people who saw and took opportunities, not so much for themselves, but in their roles as social entrepreneurs and servant leaders. They have found that there is support, from Africa and beyond, for their enlightened vision of community development and the empowerment of young people. They have been very fortunate and, of course, not everyone can emulate their success, but their stories should inspire other young people to dream big and set their aspirations high.

The message for African leaders and institutions around the world is that young people are worth investing in and need to be trusted as essential catalysts for development.

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