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LIFESTYLE Eswatini's Premier Lifestyle Magazine



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THE CURRENCY OF LOVE

Understanding The Dynamics of Money In Modern-Day Relationships

EXCLUSIVE

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W Winter season and I have a love-hate relationship! We would probably be listed as 'It's complicated' relationship status on social media, Facebook to be precise.

To me, winter is like that relative that you don't really want to see but have to since, well, you're related. But just like a complicated relationship or a weirdo relative, you still enjoy some things about each other.

Also, in Winter, we can be more fashionable. With more items of clothing to work with our options for mixing and matching are endless and our needs for colour coordination can be met!

We can accessories with gloves, scarfs, long socks, beanies to name a few. We all love to dress to impress once in a while, it makes us feel good, consolidates our identity and inspires others to do the same!

So readers, welcome to our Winter Issue. This is our second issue and I must say it is one of a kind read that you really don't want to miss!

As we all know that we are heading to Standard Bank Luju Food and Lifestyle festival, this is your 'guide'. We have your lined-up acts who are ready to set the stage on fire. We caught up two local acts namely; Iya and Sibuzi Manzini, Boy! I must say they are ready for the festival.

Are you like me, worried on what to wear at the festival, I kid you not. I did not know what to wear until I got to compile this Issue with the Team Kulture! So, worry not, we got you.

FROM THE TEAM DESK We Are Back!

We've got the inside scoop on the Luju Festival's captivating fashion theme, "Threads of Time", part of the larger creative vision: A Return to the African Future.

To spark your style inspiration, we caught up with none other than Pinky Glover, the powerhouse behind HoneyChildStyles (HCS). A true fashion queen and industry icon, Pinky needs no introduction. She breaks down how HCS represents unisex, trans-seasonal, and transitional loungewear, crafted for comfort, confidence, and everyday flair. Honestly, if your wardrobe doesn't feature a piece from HCS yet... where have you been?

We also had the absolute pleasure of diving deeper into the world of everyone's favourite MP, Tfutfuka from Ekuphuleni, brilliantly brought to life with hilarious flair by the comedic genius Mdura.

Plus, we dive into the often-tricky territory of money and relationships. How do you manage love and finances without losing your mind, or your bank balance? We turned to two experts: marriage counsellor and academic Mfanaleni Mkhathshwa, and Certified Finance Coach and Author, Colisile Tfwala, for their invaluable insights.

And finally, don't miss our international exclusive: an interview with the incredible DJ Thakzin, the pioneer of the 3-step sound, who's making serious waves on the global stage.

Till next Season, enjoy the read!

Ayanda!

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SHAKA ILEMBE CELEBRATES RICH **SWATI** CULTURE!

...meet your local cast; King Somhlolo, Queen Lojiba

By: Ayanda Dlamini | Pics: The Bomb Shelter Film Company

The second season of Shaka iLembe, the critically acclaimed South African drama series, which officially premiered in June, is a hit.

This season continues the narrative of Shaka's extraordinary rise, with returning stars including Nomzamo Mbatha as Queen Nandi and Senzo Radebe as King Senzangakhona.

The show's stellar first season debuted on June 18, 2023 and broke viewership records with 3.6 million viewers in its opening week.

The show is produced by Bomb! Productions for Mzansi Magic, under the MultiChoice banner, and has become South Africa's most expensive and most awarded drama series to date, winning 12 SAFTAs in 2024, including Best TV Drama.



Eswatini is not left out in this season as on episode 3, Shaka Ilembe celebrates Swati heritage with the introduction of King Somhlolo, Queen Lojiba, and the Ngwane royal family. The two cast were portrayed by Ayanda Ginindza (played King Somhlolo) and Setsabile Ginindza (played Queen Lojiba). Princes Hletjiwe (played by Sikhanyiso Sithole) was also introduced. The most beautiful and graceful of maidens, Hletjiwe is the jewel of the Swazi kingdom. As a princess under her brother, King Somhlolo, she was raised with a deep sense of duty.

Here's what they had to say about this life changing opportunity in their careers.

It was a fulfilling experience

Setsabile Ginindza (Queen Lojiba)

"It's truly an honor to be part of such an imp

actful project that highlights our culture and history. I played the role of Queen Lojiba the mother to king Somhlolo who is pivotal in advancing the storyline and emphasizing the cultural themes we aimed to portray. This character allowed me to explore various dimensions of our historical context. Working on a big-screen production like "Shaka Ilembe" was both exhilarating and challenging.

"The scale of the production brought together a diverse team of talented individuals, which enriched the creative process. Collaborating with experienced actors and crew members provided me numerous learning opportunities and insights. Additionally, knowing that we were sharing our heritage with a global audience added a layer of responsibility and pride to my work. Overall, it was a fulfilling experience that I will carry with me throughout my career."

Bringing Somhlolo character to life, wasn't easy- Ayanda Ginindza (King Somhlolo)

"Bringing the King Somhlolo character to life was not an easy task. I did a research about King Somhlolo, I went to the Eswatini National Archives helped by Lethumusa Simelane to research on how the king lived. Bringing a character to live not just by reciting lines , it demands emotional connection to the role and the ability to make the emotions convincingly to the audiences

"I have to sit down for hours with Lethumusa Simelane who works at the Eswatini National Archives telling me the whole story on how King Somhlolo was born and live, till his last day .I approached the character on what I heard about king Somhlolo because the character was almost similar to mine. Doing more research about King Somhlolo and also watching Cultural films, to see how the people in past speaks and behave and also focus on my script helped a lot."



UPCOMING EVENTS

AUG - SEPT '25

STANDARD BANK LUJU FESTIVAL

House On Fire / Mandelaras
1-2 August 2025

SWAZI RALLY ESWATINI 2025

Rider's Ranch
29 - 31 August 2025



ESWATINI INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR 2025

Mavuso Trade & Exhibition Centre
29 Aug - 7 Sept 2025

ESWATINI INTERNATIONAL COMEDY FESTIVAL

Sibani Sami Hotel
26 September 2025

UPCOMING HIGHLIGHT EVENT



**LION'S CLUB ANNUAL FAMILY FUN DAY
Manzini Club
25 Oct 2025**

The Manzini Lions Club is proud to officially launch its Family Fun Day 2025 - happening on 25 October 2025 at the Manzini Club!

This event is set to be the club's biggest fundraiser yet, and will be a day to remember for the whole family. Join the festivities and enjoy entertainment from Trompies, Itallo, ItsAllBlaq, Dj Crooks and many more...

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Swati Secrets:

Preserving Eswatini's Heritage through Natural Skincare



Deep within Eswatini's Lubombo region lies a powerful story of cultural preservation and economic empowerment that has captured both local and global attention. Swati Secrets, a company founded in 2004, is more than just a skincare brand but a mission to uplift rural women and protect the nation's indigenous trees, creating a perfect harmony between economic growth and environmental responsibility.

By Nothando Masilela

Sibusiso Dlamini, who handles sales and marketing at Swati Secrets, explains the company's dual mission, "Swati Secrets was created to provide a reliable source of income for rural women while simultaneously protecting native trees." This commitment has become the heart of the company's work, transforming it into a brand synonymous with empowerment, sustainability, and the preservation of Eswatini's rich natural heritage.

At the core of Swati Secrets is the practice of kugcoba, the traditional cracking of marula kernels, a practice passed down through generations. "Through kugcoba, we encourage the youth to continue this tradition, ensuring that our culture and values are not lost," says Dlamini. This practice is not only a vital part of Eswatini's cultural fabric but also a source of income for rural families, making it a central part of Swati Secrets' business model.

A hero ingredient in Swati Secrets' product line is marula oil, a powerful natural remedy praised for its skin benefits. "Marula oil hydrates the skin, reduces wrinkles, and helps heal wounds. It's a multi-purpose product with anti-aging properties that has become a staple for



skincare enthusiasts," highlights Dlamini. Sourced ethically from local communities in the Lubombo region, marula oil is more than just a beauty product, it is a symbol of sustainable trade and empowerment.

Swati Secrets offers an impressive range of natural oils, each with its own unique set of benefits. These include Ximenia Oil (Mathunduluka), perfect for dry skin, blemishes, acne, and reducing wrinkles; Trichilia Oil (uMkhuhlu), ideal for eczema and moisturizing the skin; and Castor Oil (uMhlafuluto), which heals cracked heels (umkenke), sunburn, and promotes healthy hair.

The brand prides itself on its organic and natural products, with internationally recognized certifications that set it apart from competitors. “Our products are certified by Ecocert and USDA, ensuring that we meet the highest standards of quality and safety,” says Dlamini. This commitment to excellence has enabled Swati Secrets to enter international markets and compete on a global scale.

Through knowledge-sharing and partnerships with local stakeholders, Swati Secrets actively educates consumers about the benefits of indigenous skincare products and the importance of supporting community-driven initiatives. “We partner with organizations like Eswatini Tourism and use radio platforms to educate people about our products, emphasizing the importance of supporting local businesses and community efforts,” Dlamini shares.



Expanding internationally has not been without its challenges, but Swati Secrets has strategically navigated these challenges. “We tackled the challenge by securing international certifications, which opened doors in markets like Europe and the USA,” Dlamini explains. With the help of partnerships with organizations such as AAP and USAID, Swati Secrets has made significant strides in markets like Taiwan and South Africa, bringing Eswatini’s indigenous treasures to the global stage.

Innovation is key to the company’s growth. In addition to skincare, Swati Secrets has ventured into the food industry, offering marula butter, cashew butter, peanut butter, macadamia butter, and cooking oils such as macadamia oil, cashew oil, peanut oil, etc. “We are focused on increasing our presence in local retail outlets so that more people can enjoy these products,” Dlamini says. The company is also committed to sustainability, repurposing marula by-products into animal feed, ensuring that nothing goes to waste.

Swati Secrets products are available at select Pick n Pay outlets in Mbabane, The Crescent, The Gables, and Matsapha Link, as well as The Hub in Manzini. The products can also be found at Imbali Fair Trade at Swazi Candles in Malkerns and the Hilton Hotel in Mbabane. The company is actively working to expand into other retail stores, such as Clicks, and also offers a variety of hampers, perfect for gifting or indulging in the brand’s luxurious products.

Swati Secrets is more than just a skincare brand, it is a movement committed to preserving Eswatini’s heritage, empowering women, and promoting sustainability. Dlamini affirms, “We are dedicated to bringing high-quality, natural products to the world while remaining true to our roots.” With its focus on community, culture, and sustainability, Swati Secrets is set to continue growing and sharing nature’s treasures for generations to come.



INSIDE



FESTIVAL 2025



By: Ayanda Dlamini | Pics: Standard Bank Luju Festival

It's that time of year again -get ready to indulge, celebrate, and connect at the 2025 Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival!

Now in its 7th edition, the Luju Festival returns on August 1-2 at the iconic House On Fire (Malandelas) in Malkerns. More than just a festival, the Luju Festival is a full-sensory celebration of African sophistication, where culinary artistry, cutting-edge fashion, soulful music, and vibrant culture come together in one unforgettable experience.

Threaded in the unique concept of the Luju festival is a rich blend of cultural discovery, economic empowerment, and personal expression. From exploring new style trends to sampling locally inspired cuisine, supporting local and regional business and creatives, to mingling with like-minded tastemakers, Luju Festival has something for everyone.

Over two days, festivalgoers can expect a timeless spread of mouth-watering experiences curated by top chefs, local and international food traders, premium wine and whiskey tastings led by connoisseurs, and a runway of world-class African fashion. With its family-friendly programming and lush setting, the Luju Festival continues to set the standard for lifestyle festivals in Southern Africa.

According to the festival's Creative Director, Jiggs Thorne, Luju consciously uses the festival platform to develop and promote the creative economy, sustainability, and small business growth, in line with Luju's festival ethos. Through culinary showcases by celebrity chefs and high-end fashion designs, Luju's tastefully curated programme is inspired by the festival's ethos, "A Return to the African Future."

"This is a celebratory tribute to Africa's artistic elegance and style, from the past to the present and onwards to the future. It's a journey of the senses and a re-imagining of our heritage through creative design and delicacies," said Thorne.

This highly anticipated festival has established itself as one of the region's leading food and fashion events, renowned for its tasteful celebration of

the diverse textures of Southern Africa. This year, festivalgoers can once again expect the experiential range of vibrant music, dazzling fashion, unique culinary exploits, and craft beverages and tastes that the Standard Bank Luju Food Lifestyle Festival is best known for.

"Luju is a celebration of art, identity, culture, and shared experiences, and we are happy to share the journey with you," shared Bongani Dlamini, Head of Sales and Marketing.

Both House On Fire and title sponsor Standard Bank Eswatini remain deeply committed to supporting the local economy and nurturing the arts industry. This year's edition of the festival will once again provide a platform for local artists, designers, and artisans to showcase their talents and creations to a diverse regional audience.

Speaking at the official launch of the festival, Standard Bank Eswatini Chief Executive(CE), Mvuselelo Fakudze,

This highly anticipated festival has established itself as one of the region's leading food and fashion events, renowned for its tasteful celebration of the diverse textures of Southern Africa.

reaffirmed the Bank’s commitment to supporting a festival grounded in purpose, stating, “This festival is more than just an event—it’s an ecosystem. A celebration of culture, creativity, and commerce shaping Africa’s future. From award-winning regional impact and SME empowerment to beekeeping projects changing lives, Luju is a living example of financing what matters.”

The CE also applauded the vital role that MSMEs play in stimulating the creative economy and reaffirmed Standard Bank’s commitment to nurturing entrepreneurship, unlocking cross-border opportunities, and championing the innovators, artisans, and trailblazers who fuel economic growth.

Culinary Programme Returns Bigger and Bolder with ‘The Forgotten Seeds’

This year’s festival promises a richer culinary experience with new and expanded events, including the Farm-to-Fork Luju Cook-Off, a Pre-Festival activation supported by **COSPE**, that will feature dynamic Chef Demos and create networking opportunities for talented local chefs. The Festival’s Culinary Director, Sasha Thorne, shares that this year’s theme, “The Forgotten Seeds,” brings together chefs and farmers to craft fresh, innovative dishes using ancient grains and often-overlooked wild and cultivated ingredients. The initiative not only celebrates indigenous and locally sourced foods but also aims to elevate chefs’ creativity and technical skills through meaningful collaboration and competition.

In alignment with this year’s theme, the

Festival aims to highlight the importance of preserving indigenous seeds, seed banks, and seed capital as essential tools for wellness, culinary innovation, and economic empowerment. A consultative training programme will be introduced to cultivate skills and encourage collaboration between participants, culminating in the co-creation of dishes to be showcased at the Luju Cook-Off.

“The Forgotten Seeds” not only celebrates indigenous and locally sourced foods but also aims to elevate chefs’ creativity and technical skills through meaningful collaboration and competition.

“This initiative is about restoring the dignity and prestige of forgotten foods while helping culinary enthusiasts and professionals alike recognize the value of sourcing fresh, local produce,” says the Festival team.

This year’s culinary program promises a vibrant and immersive experience, featuring interactive workshops and live chef demonstrations that honor the rich flavors, stories, and culinary traditions of Southern Africa. Attendees can look forward to hands-on cooking and botanical masterclasses led by renowned chefs and indigenous knowledge keepers, including Onezwa Mbola, Masipheke, Imiso, and Roushanna, each reviving ancient ingredients and bringing them back to the modern table.

These workshops will give attendees the opportunity to explore traditional preparation methods, preservation practices, and sustainable culinary

approaches, all while deepening their connection to local ingredients and ancestral knowledge.

Celebrating African Fashion and the ‘Threads of Time’

“Threads of Time” - the fashion theme for the 2025 Luju Festival makes reference to the rich tapestry of African cultural wisdom as expressed through the evolution of African textiles, fashion and adornment over the years. This theme further highlights the importance of using local materials, techniques, and sustainable practices. By drawing on Africa’s rich textile heritage and utilizing inherent natural resources, the fashion industry can create a future that honours the past while meeting the needs of both present and future generations.

Woven into the fashion theme of Luju Festival is the encouragement of attendees to explore the history, materials, inspiration and storytelling behind African textiles, and to consider how these textiles have transformed alongside fashion trends and influences throughout the years.

Within Luju’s extensive fashion programme, festivalgoers get to experience textures of the festival with an array of fashion displays on the **Mastercard Stage** to exchanges with traders at the various Fashion Hives and empowering dialogue at the Fashion Indaba, notwithstanding the chance to showcase personal expression on the Luju Blue Carpet and Best Dressed Competition.

It is within this framework that Luju supports the drive to a more sustainable future.



THE SWEETEST LAUNCH IN TOWN

Culinary exploits, high-end fashion, wine & whiskey showcases, fine music, wholesome entertainment. The blue carpet was rolled at the launch of 2025 Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival held at Mandela's in Malkerns. From artistic fashion showcases, to groovy entertainment and delightful tastes, the Luju Festival launch gave attendees the perfect glimpse into the **EAT, SWAY, LOVE** affair of the Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival





EAT at Luju Festival

The Flavour. The Heritage.
The Curation



By: Ayanda Dlamini | Pics: Standard Bank Luju Festival

As one of the leading food and fashion events in Southern Africa, within the EAT of Luju's food focused element is a celebration of Africa's culinary exploits with displays from celebrity chefs, connoisseur-led premium wine and whiskey showcases, experiential food tasting and trading, and engaging discussions between food industry enthusiasts.

The Standard Bank Luju Food and Lifestyle festival attracts a multitude of food enthusiasts from across the Southern African region and beyond. Nestled in a two-day feast that caters for wholesome family-friendly entertainment, Luju Festival is an experience you won't want to miss - especially for true the foodie.

CULINARY THEME

The Forgotten Seeds

This year's Luju culinary theme, "The Forgotten Seeds," digs deep into Africa's ancestral pantries, celebrating ancient crops, heritage grains, and the intergenerational wisdom that once sustained communities. From ceremonial feasts to seed sustenance, the theme is unlocking the power of forgotten foods and the potential they hold for a healthier, more sustainable future. Through culinary showcases, chef demonstrations, masterclasses, innovative tastings, and engaging panel discussions, the Festival delves into the preservation of indigenous seeds, the importance of seed banks, and the impact of seed capital on advancing food sovereignty and economic empowerment.

CULINARY PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Pre-Festival Activation: Farm-to-Fork Luju Cook-Off

Launching the festivities, the Farm-to-Fork Luju Cook-Off, supported by COSPE, an organization dedicated to preserving heritage farming techniques, sets the stage with an exciting pre-festival culinary competition. Chefs and local farmers team up to co-create dishes that showcase ancient seeds and a distinctive blend of wild and cultivated indigenous ingredients.

The cook-off aims to raise awareness about the richness of indigenous and locally produced foods, while also promoting innovation and skill development within the culinary community. A dedicated training programme will support participants, encouraging collaboration and creativity throughout the process.

More than just a contest, this initiative seeks to restore the dignity and cultural value of forgotten foods, and to inspire culinary enthusiasts to appreciate the importance of sourcing fresh, local produce.

Food Indaba

The Luju Food Indaba explores the concepts around "Sowing Seed for the Future", what it takes to build resilient, African-led food systems. The panel discussion topics are "Seed Capital - Investing in the Farm-to-Fork Future", and "Ancestral Intelligence - Knowledge Carried Through Time", highlighting ancestral farming techniques versus modern practices, access to seed capital for agricultural and conservation efforts, ancestral knowledge systems, regenerative agriculture, small-scale economies, heritage crops, and the vital role of local producers and food workers.



Workshops & Chef Demos

This year's programme delivers a vibrant culinary journey through hands-on workshops and dynamic chef demonstrations that celebrate the rich flavours and food traditions of Southern Africa.

Anchored around the theme "Forgotten Seeds", the programme features engaging cooking and botanical master classes led by acclaimed chefs and indigenous knowledge holders. These sessions will explore heritage-inspired recipes, innovative techniques, and lifestyle practices rooted in indigenous food systems.

Among the featured demonstrators are celebrated indigenous chef Onezwa Mbola, renowned ceramic



artist Andile Dyalvane of Imiso Ceramics, Zukisani Mrwetyana of Masipeheke Cuisine, and culinary forager Roushana Gray. From Eswatini, the ITC Livestock Value Chain in Eswatini and the Explorer's Mixology Masterclass are not-to-be-missed demos.

Participants will gain insight into traditional preparation and preservation methods, with a strong focus on local ingredients, cultural context, and sustainable practices.

Chefs & Demonstrators

Onezwa Mbola – Emandulo

Onezwa Mbola is a passionate home cook, rural mom, and founder of Emandulo, a culinary platform grounded in tradition, family, and community. Her cooking bridges past and present through meaningful, nourishing ingredients. At Luju 2025, Onezwa joins the Seed Capital panel at the Food Indaba, sharing her insights on investing in culturally rooted food systems and the role of

cooking in community and legacy building. She will also present a live demo in the Amphitheatre Culinary Hive, featuring fish and sorghum, a pairing rich in memory and sustainability.

Andile Dyalvane – Imiso Ceramics

Renowned master ceramicist and cultural storyteller, Andile Dyalvane is one of South Africa's leading contemporary ceramic artists. His globally exhibited work is deeply rooted in Xhosa ancestral knowledge and a sacred connection to the earth.



At Luju 2025, Imiso Ceramics joins the Ancestral Intelligence panel at the Food Indaba to share insights on indigenous knowledge, craft, and earth-rooted sustainability.

Roushana Gray – Veld and Sea

Forager, food alchemist, and founder of Veld and Sea, Roushana Gray explores South Africa's coastal and veld landscapes through edible plants, blending environmental education with seasonal, sensory experiences.

At the Food Indaba, she joins the **Ancestral Intelligence** panel to share insights on indigenous knowledge, foraging, and how ancestral practices deepen our connection to the land.

Roushana will also lead a live demo at the Amphitheatre Culinary Hive, guiding guests through the ancient

art of cooking with coals, smoke, and wild botanicals, a hands-on experience grounded in seasonality, sustainability, and ancestral wisdom.

Zukisani Mrwetyana – Masipeheke Cuisine

Founder of Masipeheke Cuisine, Zukisani Mrwetyana is a culinary culturalist dedicated to reviving Indigenous African foodways through traditional techniques, seasonal ingredients, and communal cooking. His work celebrates food as ceremony, a source of memory, healing, and pride.

Zukisani will lead a participatory demo in the Amphitheatre Culinary Hive, showcasing clay-pot cooking and the symbolism of earth-crafted



vessels. In partnership with Andile Dyalvane of Imiso Ceramics, the session blends ancestral cuisine with ceramic artistry.

Nose to Tail Demo by ITC Livestock Value Chain

This immersive demo, led by producers from the ITC-supported Eswatini livestock value chain, reintroduces the ancestral art of using the entire animal — not just for sustainability, but for cultural reverence and culinary richness, from prized cuts to underused parts, and the cultural and environmental value in doing so.

Explorer's Mixology Masterclass

In this Explorer Rum Masterclass, held at the Food Indaba, expert mixologist, Sikhulile, will guide guests through the art of crafting flavour-forward cocktails using organically-grown botanicals from Fresh Leaf Eswatini — from fragrant herbs to florals — to create drinks that are both refined and rooted.

Farming meets Flavour



By: Nothando Masilela | Pics: Sikhulile Nxumalo // Explorers Craft Spirits

Meet Sikhulile Nxumalo, not your typical mixologist. With a background in actuarial science and a passion for farming, he brings a unique twist to cocktail culture through Explorers Mixology, infusing local botanicals with bold ideas to craft drinks that are distinctly Swati and full of flavour.

Professionally, Sikhulile is an actuary and data analyst, and a serial entrepreneur at heart. Through Freshleaf, a farming business he co-founded with friends, he found a gateway into the beverage industry, specifically through cocktails. This led to a strategic partnership with Explorers Craft Spirits, sparking a new venture where Sikhulile began crafting and curating signature cocktails for their menu, marking the birth of Explorers Mixology.

Sikhulile explains what makes Explorers Mixology unique from other bars, focusing on experimentation and collaboration. With Freshleaf, they have direct access to a wide range of herbs and garnishes for their cocktails. "This means we're not just throwing mint on

top, we're doing due diligence research on flavor pairing and profiles," he adds. The result? Locally inspired cocktails that are affordable but still offer the sophistication of premium, high-end drinks.

His cocktails lean heavily into local botanicals, with crowd-pleasers like mint, rosemary, dried garnishes, and edible flowers taking center stage. Sikhulile's creativity doesn't stop there. "We've started experimenting with Imbuya, the pinkish-purple variety for colour, and even Baobab for a Luju-specific creation." His approach is both scientific and sensory, embodying what he calls "farming meets flavour science."

Luju Festival provides us a platform to explore, network, and bring wild ideas to life...

For festivalgoers heading to the Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival, Sikhulile's mixology masterclass offers more than just attractive drinks. "Expect a high-level understanding of what goes into mixology—from ingredients to presentation and taste.

And of course, expect some great tasting cocktails," he teases.

When asked which cocktail everyone should try at least once, he settles for a Tequila Sunrise. "It's a good way to change the perspective that tequila is only for shots."

The 2025 Luju Festival theme, 'A Return to the Source', resonates deeply with Sikhulile's ethos. "At first it felt peculiar," he admits, "though after some research, I realized how much untapped potential we have in local ingredients. It's something we should push more, creating cocktails that are uniquely Swati, so when tourists visit and attend festivals where Explorers Craft Spirits is participating, we can give them an experience they will not forget."

For Sikhulile, festivals like the Luju Festival are more than just a stage; they're a canvas. "They provide us a platform to explore, network, and bring those wild ideas to life." Outside of his own set, he's most looking forward to building relationships and exchanging ideas with other creatives and innovators. For those still unsure about attending his masterclass? His invitation is simple: "Come and taste some interesting cocktails, you will be more than glad you did."



A RETURN
TO THE
**AFRICAN
FUTURE**



1-2
**AUGUST
2025**

FOOD & FASHION INDABA

31ST JULY 2025 | HOUSE ON FIRE, MALKERNS

FASHION INDABA 9AM - 1PM



Thula Sindi
Designer (ZA)



Maureen Massingue
Kotini Kouture (SZ)



Nonhlanhla Lukhele
Sasa Lu Eswatini (SZ)



Phumzile Ntuli
Zyle Clothing (SZ)



Mbongeni Lobi
Eswatini Local Clothing
Brands Association (SZ)

FASHION INDABA PROGRAMME

- 9:00AM - ARRIVAL
- 9:30AM - PANEL 1: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FASHION BRAND
- 10:30AM - INTERMISSION: ESWATINI LOCAL CLOTHING BRANDS ASSOCIATION
- 10:45AM - BREAK
- 11:00AM - PANEL 2 : THREADS OF TIME: DESIGN INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION
- 12:00PM - Q&A AND CLOSING REMARKS

FOOD INDABA 2PM - 6PM



Onezwa Mbola
Emandulo (ZA)



Roushanna Gray
Veld and Sea (ZA)



Mhlonishwa Mabuza
COSPE (SZ)



Andile Dyalvane
Imiso Ceramics (ZA)

FOOD INDABA PROGRAMME

- 2:00 PM - SEED CAPITAL PANEL DISCUSSION (FARM TO TABLE INVESTMENTS)
- 3:00 PM - NOSE TO TAIL LIVESTOCK DEMO BY ITC A4A MSME PRODUCERS
- 3:30 PM - AI (ANCESTRAL INTELLIGENCE) PANEL DISCUSSION CENTRED ON ANCESTRAL INNOVATION AND PALAEOLITHIC (NATURE BASED, SEASONAL) DIETS.
- 4:30 PM - EXPLORERS MIXOLOGY MASTERCLASS
- 5:00 PM - COCKTAILS AND NETWORKING

**APPLY TO ATTEND THE FASHION INDABA OR
FOOD INDABA ON THE LUJU FESTIVAL WEBSITE**



From Hive to Hope

Supporting Sustainable Small-Scale Bee Farming in Eswatini

By: Standard Bank Luju Festival
Pics: Standard Bank Luju Festival

One of the outcomes of both House On Fire and Standard Bank Eswatini’s shared commitment to supporting small businesses and community development within a sustainable framework, is the Luju Bee Farming project. A portion of every ticket sold for the Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival goes towards supporting and setting up

beekeeping farms in the Lobamba Lomdzala constituency, where the festival is located, as well as a few other areas. This means that everyone who buys a ticket to the festival is directly uplifting small-scale bee farmers and related services in developing areas in Eswatini.

“Luju” means “honey” and so it was only natural that the festival should support bee farmers. Last year, the Luju festival raised E56,960 for this fund, bringing the amount up to the current total of E148,490.

A partnership between the Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival, World Vision Eswatini and Emlembe Beverages, which produces healthy organic honey, this long-term project supports beekeeping and honey production with funding, equipment, services, market linkages and technical support, as well as beekeeping services such as crop

pollination. The aim is to provide a means of making a livelihood for small-scale farmers, and furthering self-sufficiency in the honey industry in Eswatini. The project has been developed in collaboration with the local communities, to ensure that the most vulnerable groups are the main beneficiaries.

To date, World Vision Eswatini has identified and trained 60 farmers in basic honey farming management and production, from Lobamba Lomdzala, Luyengo and Ngwenyameni. Additionally, 150 beehives have been given to the Luyengo community, and about 100 trap boxes were secured in partnership with Emerald Hill Farm. As the Lobamba Lomdzala programme develops, another 125 beehives will be allocated to the newly trained farmers there.





UNAYO
Empowering
Small Businesses & Festivalgoers

By: Phesheya Mkhonta
Pics: Standard Bank Luju Festival

Standard Bank’s Unayo platform has once again partnered with the Luju Festival, bringing with it innovative digital banking solutions that benefit both festivalgoers and local traders. As a key part of the festival’s drive to promote a cashless and inclusive environment, Unayo is proving to be more than just a payment platform, it is a catalyst for economic empowerment and digital transformation.

According to Sanele Zondo, Head of Platform (Unayo) at Standard Bank Eswatini, the partnership was a natural fit. “Standard Bank is the main sponsor of the Luju Festival, so it was inevitable for Unayo, as one of our flagship products, to be part of the journey,” he explains. “Beyond sponsorship, Luju provides an ideal platform for us to educate, engage, and get feedback from our customers about their experience with the Unayo platform.”

More than just a presence at the event, Unayo’s involvement is closely aligned with its broader mission in Eswatini — driving financial inclusion. “Unayo was created to ensure that all EmaSwati can afford and access a bank account,” says Zondo. “It’s a fully digital solution that allows individuals to open an account without having to visit a branch, and we work with community-based merchants to extend our reach. Our partnership with Luju reflects our commitment to building strategic relationships that support this goal.”

As a cashless event, the Luju Festival benefits greatly from Unayo’s capabilities. Festivalgoers can make seamless payments using either the Standard Bank Unayo App or the USSD code *334#, whether they’re purchasing food at the festival’s bustling food court or enjoying drinks at the Unayo Hub. “All purchases made using Unayo at the festival will be discounted,” Zondo highlights. “It’s just one of the ways we’re enhancing the experience for our customers.”

Unayo is also playing a crucial role in supporting small business traders at the festival. Through Unayo’s business accounts, traders can accept digital payments quickly and easily, a major convenience in a fast-paced festival setting. “We’re not only helping small businesses go digital,” says Zondo. “We’re also driving traffic to their stalls



Unayo is not only making transactions easier, it's helping shape a more inclusive and digitally enabled future for all.

by covering the cost of discounts when festivalgoers pay with Unayo. These businesses can even use the platform to pay their employees’ wages during the event. It’s efficient, affordable, and empowering.”

As Unayo continues to expand its footprint in Eswatini, the message is clear: digital banking is no longer a luxury; it’s a necessity. “We encourage every Liswati to open an Unayo account,” Zondo concludes. “You can do it in under three minutes by dialing *334# or downloading the Standard Bank Unayo app. From buying airtime and electricity for free to sending money, paying for goods, and even purchasing event tickets, the benefits of Unayo are both practical and powerful.”

With its impactful presence at the Luju Festival, Unayo is not only making transactions easier, it’s helping shape a more inclusive and digitally enabled future for all.

SWAY

A Rhythmic Journey Rooted in Africa

By: Fezile Mkhathswa | Pics: George Qua-Enoo // Standard Bank Luju Festival // TKZee



This year's Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival promises an all-around musical experience that bridges tradition and innovation, inviting festivalgoers into a voyage rooted in Jazz, Afro-Soul, and a dash of contemporary sounds, setting the dance floor on fire.



A Celebration of African Identity and Innovation

The Luju Festival has long stood as a celebration of Africa's rich cultural and artistic heritage, in line with the festival ethos 'A Return to the African Future', and this year's music lineup proudly reflects that spirit.

Festivalgoers can look forward to a soulful journey through timeless rhythms and jazzy grooves, featuring icons like Sipho 'Hotstix' Mabuse and Buhlebdalo – former founder member of the world-famous group, The Soil, now carving out a powerful solo career.

Adding a modern vibe, dancefloor wizard De Mthuda, Inkabi Records' first lady, Lwah Ndlunkulu, and the spiritually resonant Phila Dlozi will all bring their dynamic energy to the mix.

Luju 2025's lineup brings a lively blend of Jazz, Soul, Afro-Pop and Amapiano, as well as a raft of DJ experiences. Some of the amazing artists to look out for include TKZee, who had an entire generation hooked on their infectious beats, and dance music maestros Jazzworx & Thukuthela.

Other outstanding acts from South Africa include the award-winning songstress Lady Zamar, with her signature blend of House, R&B, and Soul; Nomfundo Moh, a rising icon of her generation who blends Afro-Pop and Trap-Soul with heartfelt isiZulu lyrics; influential Jazz pianist Andile Yenana; trailblazing trombonist Siya Makuzeni and the edgy, bold, lordkez.

Mozambique's Xixel Langa – known in her hometown of Maputo as XL – is a must-see experience, with her vibrant stage presence and rich Afro-Soul, which has taken her to stages around the world.

From Eswatini, vocalist, guitarist, and storytelling gem, Sands, and a collaboration between Floewe and Country duo Dusty & Stones as the Feather Dusters, promise a festival to remember. Electronic maestro Sibuhle Manzini will take us on a musical journey featuring some of the all-time greats from Eswatini: Velemseni, Diba Diba, Qibho Intalektual, Bholoja, Khole and Zinia.

The honey-voiced Neo-Soul queen iYA, genre-bending DJ, Tendaness, electrifying deck-spinner, Ndumzi, and emerging stars Tribal Natives are some of the don't-miss talents from Eswatini, along with a host of local performers and DJs.

The experience - Join the Sway!

Whether you're laid back and easy going, a jazz fan, a lover of African Soul, or a curious explorer of new sounds, The Standard Bank Luju Festival's musical journey offers something for everyone, even the groovists! The African future is now, and the Luju Festival stages are set, ready to amaze and tantalize while the festival offers a heady cocktail of fun, food, fashion, and beautiful people.



A RETURN
TO THE
**AFRICAN
FUTURE**



1-2
**AUGUST
2025**

2025 FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

LUJU MAIN STAGE

FRIDAY 1st AUGUST

Gates Open: 16:00 - 02:00

16:00 _____ DJ BOB (ZA)
18:00 _____ IYA (SZ)
20:00 **SIBU MANZINI FT VELENSI, DIBA DIBA, QIDHO INTALEKTUAL, BHOLOJA, KHOLE & ZINIA (SZ)**
22:00 _____ TKZEE (ZA)
00:00 _____ DE NTHUDA (ZA)
01:00 _____ JAZZWORX & THUKUTHELA (ZA)

SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST

Gates Open: 10:00 - 02:30

14:00 _____ SIYA MAKUZENI SMALL / BIG BAND (ZA)
16:00 _____ BUHLENDALO (ZA)
18:00 _____ SANDS (SZ)
20:00 _____ SIPHO 'HOTSTIX' MABUSE (ZA)
22:00 _____ LWAH NDLUNKULU (ZA)
00:00 _____ BLAQ DIAMOND (ZA)
01:15 _____ TRIBAL NATIVES (SZ)

MASTERCARD STAGE

FRIDAY 1st AUGUST

Gates Open: 16:00 - 02:00

19:00 _____ THEMBA MDLALOSE & PROSPER MAKHANYA (SZ)
21:00 _____ XIXEL LANGA (MZ)
23:00 _____ PHILA DLOZI (ZA)

SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST

Gates Open: 10:00 - 02:30

12:00 _____ TALENT 'N' MOTION (SZ)
13:00 _____ AMIGO DA CASA (SZ)
15:00 _____ UMSANO WE CULTURE (SZ)
17:00 _____ ANDILE YENANA (ZA)
19:00 _____ MASTERCARD LUJU FASHION SHOW (SZ/ZA/MZ/ZW)
21:00 _____ THE FEATHER DUSTERS (SZ)
23:00 _____ LORDKEZ (ZA)

CULINARY PROGRAMME - AMPHITHEATRE

FRIDAY 1st AUGUST

Gates Open: 16:00 - 02:00

17:00 _____ CLAY COOKING & SEED SILO MAKING WORKSHOP WITH IMISO CERAMICS & MASIPHEKE
18:30 _____ KWV WINE PAIRING AND BLIND TASTING MASTERCLASS WITH SASKIA LESCH (ZA)

SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST

Gates Open: 10:00 - 02:30

11:00 _____ FARM TO FORK LUJU COOKOFF COMPETITION
12:30 _____ FIRE, SMOKE & WILD FLAVOUR: A FORAGED JOURNEY THROUGH THE SENSES WITH ROUSHANNA GRAY
14:00 _____ RAISED, FARMED OR FORAGED ANCESTRAL MEALS WITH ONEZWA MBOLA

STELLA ARTOIS BEER GARDEN

FRIDAY 1st AUGUST

Gates Open: 16:00 - 02:00

16:00 _____ TRIBAL NATIVES (SZ)
17:00 _____ FANTASY (SZ)
18:00 _____ SITHA (SZ)
18:45 _____ NDUMZ (SZ)
19:30 _____ LADYZEE (SZ)
20:15 _____ ROSETTA D33P (ZA)
21:15 _____ LADY ZAMAR (ZA)
22:15 _____ LOGGO (SZ)
23:15 _____ MASTER P (SZ)
00:00 _____ OBSESSION (SZ)

SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST

Gates Open: 10:00 - 02:30

14:00 _____ THE BISHOP (SZ)
15:00 _____ DRUM RHYTHM (SZ)
16:00 _____ THE SCIENTISTS (SZ)
17:00 _____ MASTER P (SZ)
18:00 _____ REKORDER (SZ)
19:00 _____ FANTASY (SZ)
20:00 _____ K2K (ZA)
21:00 _____ NOMFUNDO MOH (ZA)
22:00 _____ LOGGO (SZ)
23:00 _____ AYACITY (SZ)
00:00 _____ DJ MBO (SZ)

THE BUZZ - AMPHITHEATRE

FRIDAY 1st AUGUST

Gates Open: 16:00 - 02:00

18:30 _____ MARADONA (SZ)
20:00 _____ MISS T (SZ)
21:30 _____ YANKELA (SZ)
23:00 _____ SBU DE DRUM DJ (SZ)

SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST

Gates Open: 10:00 - 02:30

19:00 _____ CHANTEL (SZ)
20:30 _____ SBU DE DRUM DJ (SZ)
22:00 _____ TREND TWINS (SZ)
23:30 _____ ITSALLBLAQ (SZ)

BEE HIVE

FRIDAY 1st AUGUST - SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST

KIDS ACTIVITIES:

KARAOKE, SPELLING BEE, DANCE COMPETITION, CANVAS PAINTING, BEAD CHARMS MAKING, ARTS AND CRAFTS, TOY LIBRARY, VR GAMING, BUBBLE HOUSE, QUAD BIKES, JUMPING CASTLES, HORSE RIDING & MORE!

**DISCOUNTED TICKETS ON UNAYO:
WHATSAPP "HI" TO 7805 6364 & FOLLOW THE PROMPTS (ESWATINI ONLY)
TICKETS ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE VIA WWW.LUJUFESTIVAL.COM**



SIBU MANZINI

to set Luju stage on Fire

Fusing gospel roots with the pulse of Afro House and the soul of electronic music, he's carved out a unique sound that speaks to both heritage and innovation. This year, he brings that dynamic energy to the Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival where creativity, culture, and rhythm collide.

By: Ayanda Dlamini | Pics: Sibuzi Manziini

Rooted in Africa and packaged to the world, the Standard bank LUJU Festival line-up has always embraced the eccentric and unearthed the eclectic.

Music, dance, spoken word – all forms of creative expression engage and enlighten festival goers with powerful messages and memorable performances.

In true Standard bank LUJU Festival style, the line-up this year will feature a wholesome mix of pan- African and international artists from across different genres who do more than simply entertain but use their art as a powerful form of creative expression.

With the legendary support of Velemseni, Diba Diba, Qibho Intalektual, Bholoja, Khole and Zinia, Sibuzi Manziini's set promises a masterclass in sonic storytelling.

From gospel roots to global decks, his set fuses Afro House with electronic soul, remixing legends and scoring films with finesse.

Speaking to Kulture, he says he is incredibly excited and honoured to be part of the Luju Festival this year.

"It's such a beautiful celebration of African creativity, music, and culture, and being invited to perform means a lot to me. This platform allows artists

like myself to connect with an audience that truly appreciates the diversity of our sound. I'm looking forward to sharing my music, honouring the journey that got me here, and hopefully creating a meaningful experience for everyone who comes to the show."

He adds that his fans should expect a soulful, spiritual set with a live band.

"I'll be performing mostly my songs with one of the best vocalists I've worked with."

For starters, Sibuzi Manziini, formerly known as Parcel SWZ, is a producer and DJ from the Kingdom of Eswatini. As a child, his musical ear was developed through singing chorale and gospel music in church (particularly the Methodist sound), as well as Djing for his peers at school events. Sibuzi Manziini's career was established in

2018 and his sound centers around electronic music, afro house but is not limited to as he has a diverse musical pallet. He already boasts such international collaborations as

Brazilian band Ima for the song 'Mangueador.' In addition to its success, this piece was featured on the film score of a Brazilian short film "Os dias depois" (2020). More recently, one of his proudest achievements has been working on the post production for DJ Ganyani's latest single "Emakhaya" feat Sino Smolo and Kwesta.



Sibuzi Manziini and Velemseni recently reunited to deliver "Indlela," an Afro House masterpiece capturing the soulful essence of finding one's path. "Indlela," meaning "the way," is a rhythmic fusion of Afro House and electronic elements, where Velemseni's powerful vocals channel a heartfelt prayer for the divine Creator's guidance.

Her lyrics convey a deep hope for dreams fulfilled and a future illuminated. This inspiring and uplifting track, filled with spirit and energy, is set to be a summer anthem that resonates with everyone pursuing their destiny.

iYA is ready

Authentic Sound, New Music & A Luju Festival Debut

By: Ayanda Dlamini | Pics: Iya

iYA is the girl that she thinks is she is. Her music is authentic, natural, and full of feeling.

iYA is an Eswatini born singer-songwriter who emerged into the scene 2022 after dropping her debut EP "Straight Up".

The following year, 2023, she teamed up with Grammy award winning singer/songwriter Manana to co-write and Produce her sophomore EP "In My Feels" which was well received by her audience.

This EP defined her sound and cemented her presence in the industry.

Simplistic and Natural in approach her sound is a blend of Neo Soul, RnB and Soul.

iYA is set to release her debut Album mid 2025 co-written and Produced by Manana. This year, on the first weekend of August she will be making her debut performance at the Standard Bank Luju Food and Lifestyle Festival! This is where she will be performing her new music.

"I dropped my debut album on the 27th of June and it will be my offering. My fans should expect feels, allow yourself not only to listen to the music but to feel it too. And please introduce my music to your friends and neighbours," she says.

"I've been attending the festival for years now and loved the experience more and more each year. I've always wanted to be a part of it and thank God I'm there this year. Inside!"

iYA has since Performed at numerous events and festivals across the country including the prestigious MTN Bushfire Festival 2023/2024. She has also graced stages in South Africa and Botswana.

She has appeared and performed on SABC 3's Espresso Breakfast show and play listed in a number radio stations

including Power Fm (SA), Gold Dust Radio (UK), Radio Botswana 2 (BW) and EBIS to name a few.

And now, with her debut album 'Feel Deeply' dropped June 27, she's ready to go even deeper.

If you've been following her journey, you know this moment didn't happen overnight. iYA has spent the last three years doing the work quietly, consistently.

From her debut EP Straight Up to the soul-shaping In My Feels (co-written and produced by Grammy winner Manana), she's built a sound that doesn't try to prove anything.

The EP, which iYA said helped her discover what she really wanted to say, gave her sound depth. Her lyrics became sharper, her melodies more vulnerable. And people noticed.

"In My Feels helped me tap into my emotions in a more structured way, wanted to talk about what it means to feel everything, all at once. And not apologise for it." She has said in interviews.

Since then, iYA has been a steady presence on stages across Eswatini, South Africa, and Botswana.

"I grew up in a Christian family and I'm the least of four kids (my two sisters were already in high school by the time I got to primary, blasting RnB music every weekend) so I've always been exposed music. Lots of Christian music, RnB, Soul and whatever was popular on radio.

"My love for music has always been there. I knew I wanted to do music as early as mid-primary and decided to go for it after high school. One of the best decisions I've ever made. Everything else sort of organically align after I made the decision leading to right now."

You don't want to miss iYA's performance at the Luju stage! Her live sets are known for their cleanness.

She often appears with a band or acoustic backing, allowing her voice to be front and centre. People who've seen her live say the same thing, she doesn't perform at the crowd she performs with them.

And yet, she's still remarkably down to earth. Despite working with celebrated creatives and growing her profile across the region, iYA remains calm and grounded.

The music, for her, is sacred. And that's what fans have come to love most about her. Her stories feel honest. Her voice feels familiar. And her songs feel like letters you once wrote but never sent.

Looking back at Straight Up, her first EP, you hear the rawness of someone just entering the scene. Songs like 'Skin' and 'Call me' introduced listeners to a voice that was still finding itself but even then, it was clear that this was someone to watch.





LOVE

at Luju Festival

By: Fezile Mkhathshwa & Ayanda Dlamini
 Pics: Standard Bank Luju Festival



The fashion theme for this year's Standard Bank Luju Festival is **'Threads of Time'**. It speaks to a blend of African history, tradition, and storytelling through design.

MasterCard will again be partnering with the festival to bring you a unique and exhilarating exhibition of sophistication and elegance by supporting the Luju Fashion Show on the Mastercard stage, where six local designers and 3 regional designers will be bringing their concepts to life alongside guest international designer, Thula Sindi, who will be showcasing his exclusive line, as well as engaging and exchanging a wealth of knowledge with fashion enthusiasts, at the second edition of the Luju Fashion Indaba, taking place just a day before the main event kicks off.

INTERPRETING THE FASHION THEME

"As we prepare our Luju Festival outfits and explore the threads of time, may we embrace the richness of African traditional textiles and print from across the continent. Blending modern and Eswatini cultural styles while choosing the use of natural and sustainable fabrics as you interpret this theme. Thank you for being part of this incredible journey. Together, let's have a future that celebrates our heritage and embraces the infinite possibilities of Fashion."- Philippa Thorne, Festival Fashion Curator

When picking out an outfit here's what would inspire the ideas that the theme seeks to create, not forgetting to incorporate Eswatini cultural elements:

Embrace African Motifs and meaningful African Prints: Incorporate iconic African motifs such as Kente, BarkCloth, Mudcloth or Shweshwe. These patterns are rich with cultural significance, with Kente, for example, symbolizing history and storytelling through its vibrant colours and intricate designs, originating from ancient weaving traditions that predate colonial times.

Choose Sustainable Fabrics: Prioritize textiles made from sustainable materials like cotton, hemp, or linen, which are biodegradable. Think about the life cycle of your garment. What is the fabric made from, who made the cloths and where, and where will it end up when you have finished wearing it?

Blend Modern and Cultural Styles: Re-visit historical clothing and adornment and combine with contemporary style and innovation. Create your own vision of how traditional references might be utilized in today's clothing, to ensure African roots are authentically represented in your fashion choices.

Highlight Handcrafted Artistry: Use accessories that reflect African craftsmanship, such as beaded jewellery, woven bags, or leather sandals. A handcrafted beaded necklace, for instance, highlights the meticulous artistry and cultural heritage of Africa.

Celebrate Cultural Colors and Textures: Embrace the vibrant colours and textures characteristic of Africa. A brightly coloured dashiki or a textured mud cloth jacket can make a statement and celebrate the dynamic spirit and ancient inspirations that continue to define African textiles.

Don't forget to scope out websites like industriafrica.com for inspiration!



EXPERIENTIAL FASHION AT LUJU 2025

Mastercard Luju Fashion Show

A Regional Fashion Showcase spotlighting local and regional fashion designers and their unique collections, the Luju Fashion Show hosted on the Mastercard Stage provides a platform to spotlight talented and inspiring designers from Eswatini and across the Southern African region to showcase their unique designs. This year will see showcases by headline designer Thula Sindi, from South Africa, and fashion brand Ithaca, by Marcus Zvinvashe from Zimbabwe, as well as Xigubo by Levi Maluvele from Mozambique.

The runway exhibition revolutionises traditional fashion show formats by incorporating elements of performance and entertainment, enriching the overall experience and cultivating a vibrant and thrilling atmosphere under this year's fashion theme "Threads of Time".



Luju Fashion MSME Development

The Luju Fashion Programme supports six local fashion designers along their journey to create a collection for the 2025 Mastercard Fashion Show.

Providing mentorship, technical support, trade linkages, and media coverage, Luju supports the growth and development of Eswatini fashion entrepreneurs.

Luju Fashion Café - Artisanal Craft & Design

The Luju Fashion Café Spotlights African craftsmanship and promotes the growth of small-scale, independent businesses, offering a unique shopping experience for one-of-a-kind designs and artisanal pieces. This space encourages the use of sustainable materials, cultivates authentic partnerships and supports the advancement of livelihoods at grassroots level.



Luju Fashion Café – Mentorship & Development

The Fashion Café is one of the festival platforms that supports small business growth in the fashion industry, through development partnerships.

The ITC Launchpad initiative is part of the broader "Eswatini: Promoting Growth Through Competitive Alliances" programme supported by the EU and implemented by ITC, in partnership with the Eswatini Government, to foster job creation, export-led growth, and sustainable development. Another trader support initiative, supported by Kuyenteka SACCOS & Taiwan ICDF, in partnership with the Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival. This initiative provides branding, marketing, and product development support to MSMEs, preparing them for a successful festival trading experience.

Best Dressed Competition

This festival highlight celebrates the bespoke, vibrant, and fashion-forward styles that represent Luju. With exciting prizes awarded to the best-dressed festivalgoers, the Best Dressed Competition encourages guests to express their unique identity through captivating styles that embrace the essence of Luju's festival ethos.

LUJU FASHION INDABA

The Luju Fashion Indaba is an industry conference on the business of fashion, held on Thursday morning before the main festival opens. It focuses on the current state of fashion in Eswatini and the broader African continent, and works towards cultivating a value chain that prioritizes sustainable production and consumption within the fashion industry.

The thread running throughout the Fashion Indaba is "Nurturing Growth in Eswatini's Fashion Sector for MSMEs". This is expressed in the two panel discussions, "Building a Sustainable Fashion Brand" and "Design Innovation and Sustainable Production", which will be followed by a Q&A session and networking opportunities.

Luju Festival Headline Designer

THULA

SINDI

Thula Sindi is a celebrated South African fashion designer known for his elegant and timeless ready-to-wear creations.

Born in Klerksdorp Northwest in 1983 his keen interest in Fine Art led him to study at The Nation School of The Arts in Johannesburg & later on study Fashion Design at LISOF. Sindi's career began with a notable position as head designer for the Dutch textile company Vlisco. This experience paved the way for the launch of his label.

In 2006 Thula Sindi presented his first solo collection, capturing the spotlight at South African Fashion Week. Sindi's designs are described as a blend of 'languishing luxury, love and a little lavishness' and focuses on creating accessible, high-quality garments that bridge the gap between high-end couture and everyday wear.

Throughout his career, Sindi has garnered significant recognition both locally and internationally. His work has been showcased on numerous prestigious platforms, including fashion weeks in Paris, Hong Kong, Beijing, and New York. Some of his notable accolades include:

- Being named SA Tourism Designer of the Year in 2012.
- Receiving the Best Youth Entrepreneur title from the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) in 2012.
- Being listed in Forbes' "30 Under 30: Africa's Best Young Entrepreneurs" in 2013.
- Being named one of the Mail & Guardian's top 200 young South Africans.

In addition to his design work, Thula Sindi is a vocal advocate for local creatives and entrepreneurship.

Catch Thula Sindi's unique designs as the headline designer at the 2025 Standard Bank Luju Fashion Show, made possible through the vision and support of Mastercard. Experience his exclusive collection alongside Swazi talent, where Sindi will also share strategies for scaling African fashion at the Luju Fashion Expo. A moment of inspiration, collaboration and celebration, rooted in creativity and powered by partnership.



ON THE mastercard RUNWAY



From bark cloth to bold prints, this year’s fashion story is all about heritage, sustainability and fearless innovation. Stitched into in the heart of the Luju is the festival’s drive for local entrepreneurship development. This drive is boldly expressed through the enactment of the Luju Fashion Programme’s SME Development activity. The Luju Fashion Program sets to support local fashion designers along their journey to create a collection to be showcased on the Luju Fashion runway hosted on the Mastercard Stage. By providing mentorship, technical support, trade linkages, and media coverage, Luju aims to support the growth and development of Eswatini fashion entrepreneurs. For this year’s event, the festival is thrilled to reveal Eswatini’s talented designers shaping this narrative.

Kwenzi Zwane, Black Degree (SZ)

Black Degree explores black identity, resilience, and creativity, encouraging people to invest in themselves. At Luju, Kwenzi curates a collection based on authenticity, exploration and diversity.

Seluliwe Mdluli, Crochet by Selu (SZ)

Crochet By Selu’s Luju collection is inspired by Africa’s rich culture and beauty, blending traditional techniques with modern twists and incorporating innovative materials like Ankara fabric for a fresh, eclectic look.

Maureen Massingue, Kotini Kouture (SZ)

Kotini Kouture makes high-end contemporary womenswear. The Luju collection concept is Kutfomba: The Tale of a Swati woman.



Nothando Dlamini, Rose Peti (SZ)

Rose Peti is a brand that celebrates women’s uncompromising resilience and passion for life, with the belief that that simplicity and elegance cannot work without either.

Madoda Vilakati, Ruff Cut (SZ)

This upcycling denim fabric designer is deeply inspired by the roots and evolution of African printed fabrics. His Lujucollection fuses denim with bold African prints, rich in symbolism, history, and vibrant colours.

Fortunate Mdluli, Kayses Creations (SZ)

Fortunate Mdluli creates a streetstyle Luju collection, using African fabrics with a modern contemporary twist.

Sthembile Masuku, The House of Dandy (SZ)

The House of Dandy and Khokho have collaborated to create an exciting design collection.





OUT OF
OFFICE

Inside the life of *Ayandza Motsa*

By: Ayanda Dlamini | Pics: Ayandza Motsa

Work-Life Balance...What Does It Really Mean?

The concept of work-life balance often brings to mind the challenge of juggling career demands with personal well-being. At its core, it refers to the ability to effectively manage both professional responsibilities and personal commitments in a way that reduces stress, supports self-care, and enhances overall quality of life.

Striking this balance isn't a one-size-fits-all approach, it's deeply personal and varies based on individual needs and priorities. The goal is to create harmony between work, family, and personal time, enabling individuals to thrive both in and outside of the workplace.

For Ayandza Motsa, Customer and Marketing Specialist at Old Mutual Eswatini, maintaining that balance is an ongoing effort. As a senior executive, his role demands a significant portion of his time and energy. However, he is intentional about prioritising what matters most to him, both professionally and personally.

How do you balance your work and personal life effectively?

I like to think of my life as a three-ring circus: work, family, and "me-time." My siblings are my anchor; spending time with them brings so much color to my life. Whether we're traveling together, praying as a family, or simply relaxing at home, those moments keep me grounded and remind me of what truly matters.

My friends are another key part of that balance; they're my happiness boosters. We laugh, catch up, and just enjoy each other's company. When it comes to "me-time," I enjoy diving into thought-provoking novels or tuning into marketing podcasts that spark new ideas and help shape my professional growth.

For me, maintaining balance means intentionally creating space for the people and activities that bring joy and fulfillment, even when work demands try to take center stage.

How do you usually spend your weekends or time off from work?

Weekends and holidays are my time to recharge and get inspired. I enjoy a blend of rest and exploration. I love curling up with a good book, especially ones that spark creativity and fresh thinking. Traveling is a big passion of mine. Whether it's with family or friends, exploring new places and experiencing different cultures keeps me energized and open-minded.

Music is another love of mine. Over the years, I've developed a deep appreciation for classical and jazz, they help me unwind and offer a fresh source of inspiration. I also enjoy listening to marketing podcasts that keep me professionally sharp and creatively engaged.

And lately, I've been thinking it might be time to give golf a try — who knows, it could be my next great escape! Do you ever experience burnout and how do you handle it?

Off course, I do experience burnout from time to time, especially when everything feels overwhelming. When that happens, I find it helpful to step back and take a break, focus on things that make me happy. I also make sure to prioritise self-care, like getting enough rest and spoiling myself on therapeutic massages, everybody needs a massage. Talking to friends or family for support and perspective also helps me regain my energy and focus. I believe recognising the signs early and giving myself permission to pause is key to managing burnout and coming back stronger. And yes, I've been putting my gym sessions on hold, but next week, I'm definitely going back, no excuses this time.

Where do you see your career in the next five years?

Having been with Old Mutual for just over a year, I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to grow within such a dynamic organisation. The role has pushed me beyond my limits, and I'm committed to making a meaningful impact, particularly in driving digitisation to enhance our customer experience.

In the next five years, I see myself stepping into a more senior, strategic role where I can lead transformative projects and contribute to shaping the future of our services. I'm also passionate about continuous learning and actively seek out opportuni-

ties through training, collaboration, and staying ahead of industry trends.

And who knows, perhaps one day, I'll be running my own marketing consultancy. Whatever the path, I'm excited about what lies ahead and ready to embrace the opportunities that come with it.

Moving on to the fun stuff. If we handed you a microphone and a karaoke machine right now, what's your go-to song?

Dance with my Father by Luther Vandross





You're stranded on a desert island but get to take 1 snack, 1 playlist, and 1 friend. What are you packing and who's coming?

I'd bring a granola bar for sustenance, it's easy to carry and satisfying. My playlist would be a curated mix of uplifting gospel songs to keep my morale high, maybe including some African pop hits to lighten my mood. As for my friend (Ha ha!) that's a tough one. Well, I'd choose someone with a positive attitude and a knack for problem solving, to ensure we make the best of the situation together. Together, we'd turn the tough situation into an adventure worth remembering, and that would be my friend Pako Lefifi, sadly he is deceased.

What's the most spontaneous thing you've ever done just for fun?

One day, my friend was passing by my house in Siteki and casually drops, "I have a trip to KaHhohho, please walk me" that time Hhohho is over 100 km away from Siteki. Naturally, I thought we'd just be going into town. But then she, very obvious and in my face, convinced me to come to Simunye with her. Next thing I know, I'm in KaHhohho wearing basketball shorts. I was young, reckless, and probably a bit clueless then, definitely the "naughty" phase. And boy, did I put on a show in each bus. We ended up staying there for the weekend... with no clothes to change or toiletries, but hey, I had a blast. To this day, they still want me to visit again, probably to see if I can top the chaos. Crazy times.

What's one fashion decision from your past you're still recovering from?

So, during my university days, my friend and I were roped into being part of the groomsmen crew at a wedding from

church. Our brilliant idea? Silver shiny, eye blinding suits paired with pink shirts, because obviously, we thought we were some sort of fashion icons. We strutted around thinking we were a hit. Fast forward a few years, and I finally looked at the pictures... and I thought, "What on earth was I thinking?" Honestly, I wouldn't want those photos anywhere near me.

What's something you do regularly that your 21-year-old self would be shocked (and maybe impressed) by?

Definitely reading. I used to hate reading, but now I spend time reading industry books, and honing my skills. It's funny, I used to think learning was something you only did in school, now, it's a constant habit. Who knew that maturity would come with the realisation that the more you learn, the more there is to discover? So that little boy would be a little impressed by my consistent commitment to continuous learning and professional development.

What's your personal definition of success, outside of titles and sales targets?

It definitely is the ability to find balance and fulfilment in both my professional and personal life. It's about cultivating meaningful relationships, continuously growing as a person, and feeling content with the impact I make no matter how small, even if it's just making someone's day a little brighter.



Success isn't just about titles or numbers, it's about living authentically, staying true to my values, and ending each day with a sense of purpose and gratitude.

What music do you listen to?

It's mainly African Jazz, soul, Afro-Pop and Classical music

Do you have a Favourite sports team?

Yeah, I'm a football fan and XI Men in Flight was my first love, but since they're now defunct, I've since shifted my support to Lozitha Spurs, locally. In South Africa I'm a die hard Khosi (Kaizer Chiefs).

You mentioned you love reading. What is your favourite book?

Probably 'Take Charge' by Nyimpini Mabunda

Your Favourite TV show or Movie?

I really used to love the old Khala Mbumbadumbane, but since my heroes have since departed, I'd say Shaka Ilembe is now my favorite. I'm a sucker for history content; there's just something fascinating about stories of the past and the legendary figures who shaped our history.

What is your go-to meal to cook?

Creamy bacon and mashroom pasta are definitely my signature meal. I like to think of it as my culinary masterpiece.

What is your favorite restaurant?

As a true Steki boy, I have to say Espinho is my top choice. It's hands down the best eatery in the country, amazing food and great vibes.

What's your ideal vacation destination?

Anywhere in Africa, any day! But if I had to choose one spot, it would be Lamu in Kenya. It's the most peaceful escape, beautiful ocean views paired with a rich, captivating history.

Part comic relief... part social critic

...an unexpected voice
for the everyday liSwati...

By: Fezile Mkhathshwa

Pics: Craft Space // The Lion King Studios

Mduduzi Dlamini, widely known as 'Mdura,' burst onto the comedy world in 2015 through winning the "LOL" comedy competition, where his sharp, relatable humor about relationships, stereotypes, religion, and personal experiences captivated both judges and audiences. Holding a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science from the University of Swaziland (UNESWA), Mdura made the bold decision to leave his full-time job as a high school geography teacher to pursue comedy professionally, becoming one of the country's pioneering full-time comedians.

Today, Mdura is much more than a stand-up comic. He's an award-winning performer, event host and MC, brand ambassador, content creator, team-building facilitator, and creative writer. Most recently, he's added a new dimension to his career: political satire. Through his viral alter ego, Tfutfuka, a quirky, street-smart fictional MP from Ekuphileni, Mdura engages audiences in political discourse with humor and heart. In a time when politics can feel distant or

divisive, Tfutfuka offers a refreshing take: part comic relief, part social critic, and an unexpected voice for the everyday liSwati. In an era where political conversations often feel inaccessible or polarising, Mdura has carved out a unique space for civic engagement and entertainment through satire. We sat down with charismatic creative at the newly revamped Equinox Restaurant in Mbabane to find out more about Mduara and the fascinating character Tfutfuka - here's what he had to share...

Hi, Mdura. Can you take us through your comedy journey, where we've witnessed constant growth from comedian to event host, brand ambassador, mentor, and more?

In all honesty, I didn't have a set plan that mapped out my journey. When I started, it was just about trying things out and seeing where they led. All I wanted at the beginning was to do stand-up comedy, to tell my story through humor and entertain people.

But as time went on, opportunities started to come my way. Someone would say, "Hey, you're funny - could you host this event?" So I did. Then it was, "You speak well - how about doing a campaign that uses humor to drive a message?" And I gave that a shot too.

Before I knew it, I was on the radio, speaking to young people, mentoring creatives, and collabo-

rating with different organizations. I enjoy working with youth, especially other creatives, helping them discover and develop their potential.

That's how my different roles have evolved. Now I also use characters, like the MP, to highlight social issues through satire. And beyond the comedy, I have a real passion for mental health advocacy and support programs for men, spaces where I don't always show up as the comedian, but as someone who cares and wants to contribute meaningfully.

Reflecting on your journey as one of Eswatini's first recognised stand-up comedians, what significant changes, opportunities, or challenges have you observed in the local comedy scene over the past few years?

Over the past decade, the local comedy scene has grown in exciting ways. Comedians are no longer seen as just event "fillers"; we're now valued as professionals, with major brands and corporates hiring us for campaigns, sometimes even on retainer. More of us are being trusted with MC roles at national events, which speaks to a deeper respect for the craft.

...beyond the comedy, I have a real passion for mental health advocacy and support programs for men, spaces where I don't always show up as the comedian, but as someone who cares and wants to contribute meaningfully.

But challenges remain. Some clients still fear that comedy isn't "serious" enough for formal settings, especially corporate gigs, which ironically are the best paying. Sometimes we face having to deal with institutions that need convincing that comedians are intelligent professionals. I've had to turn down many gigs where I was asked to submit my jokes in advance for vetting. That kind of micromanagement shows a lack of trust in our craft and professionalism because it assumes that comedians are not mature enough and are unable to adjust to different audiences.

Another major challenge is the lack of funding for comedy projects. Comedy, like other arts, such as music, needs structured support to thrive. Right now, we're still building from the ground up.

There has long been a perception, sometimes expressed critically, that local comedians aren't as funny as they believe themselves to be, and that audiences tend to favour international acts. Do you feel this sentiment still exists today? If so, how has it impacted your work or the growth of local comedy?

People are showing up and paying for local comedy, that's the truth. I've toured all four regions, including the most remote towns, and the support has been real. But there's still a need for education around what stand-up comedy actually is. Many people are familiar with comedy through online skits, but these don't generate income; the real business is in bookings and live events.

While corporate institutions are warming up to comedy, there are still individuals within them who aren't fully on board. That said, the positive reception now far outweighs the skepticism. For example, at my weekly Thursday shows, people come for free but often tip and express deep gratitude. It's shown me just how powerful laughter can be, comedy should honestly be recognized as a form of therapy!

Let's dive into the subject of one of your most iconic characters, the infamous MP Tfutfuka. How did he come to life?

I've always played

different characters in comedy since 2017, loud, strong, varied characters, and recently, I developed a new character, MP Tfutfuka, which is different because it relates to everyday issues like politics, making it both conversational and controversial, but ultimately impactful. This character is meant to start conversations and raise awareness about social and political dynamics.

How would you describe this character and its uniqueness?

The MP is different because it relates directly to politics and daily life issues everyone encounters. It can be seen as controversial because it unpacks uncomfortable truths, making it a social commentary. It sparks conversations about societal issues, which is what I aim for as a comedian, using humor to reflect and critique society.

Why would you say makes Tfutfuka resonate strongly with your Eswatini audience on social media- just humour, honesty, or something bigger?



I think it's about how people project their perceptions onto him, aligning him with certain individuals or personas. When you watch a movie based on a true story, you might cry because it touches a nerve. Similarly, everyone knows an MP Tfutfuka in their life, and when they see the character, they relate because they've seen similar situations—the promise maker, the manner of expression yet also so charismatic. That familiarity makes people resonate and sometimes feel it's real, which fuels conversations.

Are you personally interested in politics or just inspired by it? The character seems to carry that persona a little too well.

As an artist, I believe in being eclectic, thinking globally, reading widely across business, economics, art, fashion, as well as politics, so I can relate to various perspectives. Inspiration comes from everything around me. As an actor and comedian, I aim to portray characters convincingly by understanding their context, how doctors behave, politicians, or community leaders, so I don't underplay their roles. It's about being well-informed and authentic in my portrayals. I carry out the research necessary in order not to base characters on just my personal bias and portray what today seems a little too real.

Have you received feedback about your character portrayals, whether positive or negative, especially the MP?

Yes. Sometimes people believe my characters are real, asking questions or expressing concern that I might be gunning for political power in real life. I haven't received outright attacks, but I've had people think I'm serious or believe I'm the person I portray, like one lady was once concerned about a video I did where I portrayed a drunkard and she got emotional saying I may lose everything I've worked for if I continue on that path thinking I have lost reasonable control as in the skit that was posted. Interestingly, for me, it means I've portrayed it effectively. It's gratifying to see that the character is believable that much.



Has portraying this character

changed your perception of politics or leadership in any way?

Stepping into this character has taught me a lot about what it means to hold a public position, things the general public might not always see. I've come to realize that I probably couldn't run for political office myself. Once you're in that position, you're no longer entirely your own person; you belong to the public. You're tied to your promises and the weight of constant responsibility. I've found that I can make more of an impact from outside the political system, where I'm free to advocate and influence without the overwhelming pressure that comes with being in office.

Considering the influence the character could have, do you see it as a long-term project or just a skit?

It can go either way. I enjoy performing and don't like to leave the stage when the audience wants more. I might wake up someday and decide to fully develop the character, or I might return to other projects. Inspiration guides me; I follow what feels natural. I prefer creating content when inspired rather than forcing it, especially with platforms like TikTok, where content can become superficial if driven solely by trends. It has to be organic, then let's see where it goes.

How do you balance these different personas and roles—your real self versus the characters you portray?

The lines are very thin. I can quickly switch between being myself and embodying a character, like

switching a switch, because it's part of the job. Just like actors who stay in character, I can cry on cue or adopt a voice. It's a job hazard, and I have to remind myself that these personas are just roles. I have things around me that help me switch off and remember, "MP would never do that." When I step out of character, I focus on being myself, especially to keep a genuine connection with the audience.

With that said, how do you navigate public interactions with fans of your characters, even on days when you're just out being yourself?

If someone approaches me and shows love or excitement, I always try to give them a moment, some time, and attention. For me, it's about respecting their experience and making that moment count for them. Even if it's a character they've connected with on screen, I can still offer a quick, genuine interaction. That's part of the performance too; the connection doesn't end when the camera stops. It's all about finding that balance between being the character and being present as a real person.

We've seen the MP occasionally take on business roles. Can we expect more brand collaborations with the character as part of a business move?

At the end of the day, it is business, and we recently did an educational video about the Ombudsman legal processes that received positive feedback.

As an artist, I believe in being eclectic, thinking globally...Inspiration comes from everything around me.

That said, I usually prefer to handle more serious, in-person deals as Mdura, not through the character I've created. While I might step into the role here and there, I generally like to keep fictional characters just that, fictional, and behind the screen.

What other projects are you currently pursuing, and where can people catch you to support your work?

I have a weekly Live Comedy show every Thursday at 23:28 Lounge in Mbabane. People can also catch me at monthly events all around Eswatini, which I publicize through my official social media pages.

Thank you for your time, Mdura, and all the best on the honorable MP's future endeavors.



KFC

KFC ESWATINI

Purpose driven growth at its tastiest.

KFC Eswatini is turning up the heat with the opening of three brand-new restaurants, KFC Crescent, KFC Siteki, and KFC Nkonyeni, bringing its total footprint to a sizzling 14 locations across the Kingdom! But this expansion is about more than just delicious fried chicken. It's a bold step forward in KFC's mission to grow with purpose and uplift the communities it serves. Staying true to its people-first approach, KFC has a policy of hiring employees from the areas surrounding each store. That means more jobs and more opportunities for locals to be part of the KFC family, making this milestone a win for everyone.

Greg Hill, General Operations Manager for KFC Eswatini, shared his excitement about the brand's growth, saying, "Our expansion is driven by a passion to lead with inclusivity, build with purpose, create jobs, and grow our brand in every area we operate. I'm humbled by these achievements and proud to celebrate the incredible work of our partners and team members as we continue sharing the joy of our best-tasting fried chicken with more of the country."

Beyond business, KFC Eswatini continues to show up as a force for good. With the support of loyal customers, the company has made meaningful investments in community upliftment. From sponsoring the Scara Thindwa Foundation with E825,000 to boost youth soccer and girls' sports, to donating E240,000 to the Philani Maswati Charity's agricultural project for sustainable livelihoods, KFC is making a real impact.

The brand also backs the International Youth Fellowship (IYF), promoting leadership and mind education among young people, and proudly supports local sporting talent like celebrated cyclist Thandeka Vilane, whose achievements continue to inspire a new generation of athletes.

And it doesn't stop there, KFC regularly donates hot meals to smaller community initiatives and responds to local needs across the country, proving that generosity is part of their secret recipe for success.

With this latest expansion, KFC Eswatini is showing that bold business moves and heartfelt community engagement can go hand-in-hand. It's purpose-driven growth at its tastiest.



African Alliance Chairperson, Sithofeni Ginindza with Cabinet Ministers at a tree-planting ceremony.



In today's world, money isn't just about the numbers—it's about power and sometimes, hidden truths. As relationships evolve and traditional roles shift, understanding the delicacy of financial dynamics has become more crucial than ever. From couples hiding bank accounts to women earning more than their partners, the landscape of financial responsibility in relationships is changing dramatically.



**Mfanaleni Mkhantshwa's
Statistical Overview**

According to William Barclay, "the whole attitude of the ancient world was that no woman could dare take any decision for herself," thus relegating women to a position analogous to that of a minor under her husband's guardianship (Mavundla et al, 2020). This perception, deeply entrenched in the doctrine of marital power, remained the defining factor of the whole concept of family, community, political, and religious life. Nevertheless, the 21st century has observed the widespread advancement of women in practically every facet of society. In their book *Bullet Proof Marriage: Your shield against divorce*, Renato and Cristiane Cardoso note that as women emerge from the simple stay-at-home-mother role to a more active and sophisticated role in society, educationally, financially, and leadership-wise, they are positioned for power, independence, and equality with men (Renato & Cristiane). The rise in women outearning their male partners reflects broader societal changes. In the United States, the Pew Research Center reports that the share of women as primary or sole

The Currency of Love:

Navigating The Complex

Dynamics Of Money In Modern Relationships

By Fezile Mkhathshwa & Ayanda Dlamini

In many parts of the world, especially urbanized communities, women are not just breadwinners; they're the primary earners. This change has implications, challenging traditional notions of masculinity and gender roles while prompting couples to redefine their financial partnerships.

Money is often intertwined with power dynamics. When one partner earns significantly more, questions of control, independence, and decision-making come to the fore. Some couples embrace this shift, viewing it as an opportunity for equality and mutual respect. Others struggle with insecurities or cultural expectations that dictate men should be the primary providers. For many women earning more, comes an added layer of complexity, balancing financial independence with partnership equality.

Financial Responsibility: Who Should Carry the Load?

Traditional notions often point at men as the primary financial providers. However, modern relationships are redefining responsibility. At its core, money is a tool—neither inherently good nor bad. Its true value lies in how couples choose to manage it. Let us delve into the stats and the shift as observed by a relationship expert and some ways partners can handle their finances and ultimately harmonize the relationship through tips from a certified financial advisor.

Our guest contributor, Mfanaleni Mkhantshwa, with years of experience as an official marriage counselor/ advisor and academia, sheds research-backed insight on this shift in the money dynamics of relationships and some of the challenges that this gives birth to.

breadwinners in opposite-sex marriages has tripled over the past 50 years, reaching 16% in 2022. Additionally, Black wives are more likely to out-earn their husbands (26%) compared to White (17%), Asian (14%), and Hispanic (13%) wives. Another study found that women promoted to top positions, often earning more than their husbands, faced a doubled risk of divorce within three years compared to men. This aligns with a study from Indonesia, which found that women's income has a positive and significant effect on divorce rates, with women's independence among the poor driving higher divorce rates.

These studies provide a comparative lens that may be relevant to African contexts where similar dynamics of economic empowerment are emerging. An article from The New York Times (January 6, 2019) titled *A Quiet Revolution: More Women Seek Divorces in Conservative West Africa* highlights that in countries like Niger, women are increasingly seeking divorces due to their husbands' inability to earn a living and changing societal expectations. Though not directly linked with women's higher-earning causality, South Africa's higher divorce rate (2.1 per 1,000 in 2023) correlates with a female labor force participation rate of around 52.38% in 2023, suggesting a possible link.

Divorce statistics on the potential relationship between divorce rates and high-earning women are particularly elusive for Eswatini. This scarcity of specific data linking women's income to divorce rates makes it challenging to draw definitive conclusions in this regard, highlighting a research gap. Nonetheless, in the past five years, Eswatini has seen a concerning rise in divorce rates, with financial pressures identified as a major contributing factor. According to the First Quarter Report for the Financial Year 2025/2026, 23 marriages are recorded, while 209 ended in divorce within three months. According to the Annual Vital Statistics Report, in 2023, divorces surged by 70%, from 232 in 2022 to 395 in 2023. The 2024/2025 report by the Ministry of Home Affairs indicates that 466 marriages ended in tears, with 307 divorces and 159 nullified.

Challenges

While this marks a significant step towards gender equality, it has introduced unexpected challenges within marriages. Research reveals a startling connection between a wife's higher income and increased marital instability, including a 50% higher likelihood of divorce and a fivefold increase in

infidelity from financially dependent male partners. Let's break it down;

Power Imbalances & Relationship Strain

When women earn more, it can disrupt traditional power dynamics, leading to feelings of insecurity or emasculation in male partners. Societal expectations of men as primary providers contribute to tension, as men may feel their role is undermined. Qualitative insights from therapists, such as Beatty Cohan, emphasize that open communication about financial roles is crucial to mitigate these imbalances, yet many couples struggle to navigate these dynamics, leading to relationship strain.

Unequal Division of Household Responsibilities

Even when women are primary earners, they often bear a disproportionate share of household responsibilities. According to research, in the U.S. marriages where wives outearn husbands, wives spend more time on caregiving (6.4 hours vs. 5 hours weekly) and housework (4.8 hours vs. 2.8 hours) compared to their husbands, who allocate more time to leisure (29.9 hours vs. 21.1 hours). This "second shift" can lead to resentment and exhaustion, further straining the marriage. We see similarities in the local context.

Societal Expectations and Gender Roles

Traditional gender norms can exacerbate tensions between women and men. These norms can pressure couples to conform to traditional roles, leading to arguments and dissatisfaction. In cultures with stronger patriarchal norms, such as in Eswatini, these tensions may be more pronounced, though specific studies are limited.



Colisile Tfwala, a Certified Finance Coach and Trainer, and Author, offers practical insights on managing finances within romantic relationships. Her advice is relevant whether you're married, engaged, or in a serious relationship.

"When we talk about financial literacy, it isn't just about Emalangeni and cents," she explains. "It's about mindset, values, and vision. Before entering a romantic relationship, it's crucial to understand the spirituality and psychology of money, along with the practical aspects of daily money management."

She emphasizes the importance of self-awareness: "You need to understand your relationship with money, your money personality, your identity, your life's purpose, and your vision for the future. Money is simply a tool meant to support that purpose. Marrying someone who doesn't know their purpose or how to direct their finances toward it, can be dangerous."

Tfwala also stresses the practical side of financial literacy. "Whether you're a woman, a man, or a young adult stepping into independence, you must learn how to budget, how debt works, and how to manage your financial behavior. Money is more about behavior than logic. In Eswatini, many people shy away from these conversations and later end up in emotionally taxing or financially abusive relationships. But financial literacy brings confidence and clarity into your relationships, protecting both your heart and your wallet."

“Money is more about behavior than logic.”

When quizzed about the benefits of shared financial decision-making in relationships, Tfwala highlights the value of unity and collaboration. "Shared financial decision-making fosters transparency, trust, and a strong sense of partnership," she explains. "When both individuals are involved in budgeting, tracking expenses, and making investment choices, it builds a team mindset, something especially powerful within a marriage. Instead of pointing fingers when finances get tight, couples start strategizing together. They become co-visionaries."

Colisile emphasizes the importance of having a shared vision. "When I coach couples, the first thing I ask is whether they have a vision board for their family. A clear, documented vision helps guide financial decisions and keeps both partners aligned. It transforms money from a source of conflict into a tool for building shared dreams."

Colisile's tips on how to handle finances in your relationship:

.....

Have open and consistent conversations about money—don't wait for a crisis to start talking. Share your financial goals and dreams with your partner. How someone responds to your dreams can reveal whether they're truly aligned with you for a long-term commitment like marriage.

Have shared goals— like home ownership, business start-ups, or kids' education. When you break down your financial goals as a family, ensure that you have short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals. Individual goals without a joint vision are bound to create an unconscious state of competition between partners, leading to an ultimate ego war.

Be honest about your income, debts, and financial habits. In any relationship, transparency and vulnerability are essential because you are a team. Before choosing a life partner, please pay attention to how they respond when you're not at your financial best.

Budget together, but leave room for individual preferences and autonomy. Creating a budget as a couple is one of the most powerful tools for financial unity. However, a healthy relationship doesn't mean losing your individuality. Allow space for each partner to have some financial freedom, such as buying what brings them joy or investing in personal passions.

Respect each other's financial background—many people carry trauma from poverty or bad financial modeling, and healing takes patience. Money is emotional. Many of us, especially in African contexts, were raised in homes where financial struggle was constant, or where money was a source of fear, secrecy, or even abuse. Don't mock or shame your partner for what they don't know. Instead, commit to learning and healing together.

Avoid unnecessary debt, especially to impress people outside your relationship— Whether it's lavish weddings, designer clothes, or borrowing for lifestyle upgrades, debt taken to please others often leads to private stress and tension. True wealth is quiet, steady, and built over time, not proven through showmanship. Focus on building a life that brings you peace, not one that looks impressive on the outside but is hollow inside. A couple that understands this will always be wealthier than they appear





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LET THE MUSIC SPEAK

Thakzin

By: Fezile Mkhathshwa

In this exclusive conversation with Thakzin, we uncover a quiet force in the music world, one shaped by humble confidence, intentionality, and a deep belief that not everything needs to be said aloud. Sometimes, the quality of work speaks loudest. And in Thakzin's case, it speaks volumes.

Thakzin, born Thabang Mathebula, is a South African DJ and producer with roots in both South Africa and Mozambique. Raised in Ivory Park near Midrand, he discovered his passion for music early on and has been honing his craft for nearly two decades. While still in school, he chose to sacrifice much of his social life to focus on perfecting his sound—never imagining that this dedication would one day make him a globally sought-after artist, known for his electrifying performances and distinct, genre-defying production style.

Thakzin's musical versatility has been thoroughly tested and proven, with his work seamlessly blending genres like Afrotech, AfroHouse, Deep House, and subtle touches of Amapiano and Gqom. His dynamic sound has led to a number of standout collaborations, including the hit track Yes God with Mörda and Oscar Mbo, Mama Thula with Zakes Bantwini, Indlu Iyasha with DJ Lag, and Mohigan Sun and Horns in the Sun with DJ Kent. And that's just the beginning—his growing catalog continues to showcase his ability to innovate across the electronic music spectrum.

Among his many contributions to the music industry, Thakzin made a groundbreaking impact on the house music scene by pioneering the subgenre known as 3Step. What began in his studio has since evolved into an explosive movement, spreading across South Africa, into Eswatini, and reaching audiences worldwide. Locally, Thakzin has brought his high-energy sets to stages such as the Farmers Market, House Musiq Fest, and most recently, the 2025 MTN Bushfire Festival. Despite his rising global presence, Thakzin remains grounded, offering fans glimpses into his everyday life and revealing the depth, discipline, and humility behind the music.

Q: What would you say has been the biggest influence on your musical journey?

Life itself. Growing up surrounded by a variety of musical styles, especially with a musician as a parent, music has always been part of my environment. I feel like a sponge, constantly absorbing sounds from everywhere, not just the genres I create. It's the essence and concept of music that inspires me most. Artists like Fela Kuti, whose music I discovered through my father's playlists, have had a subtle but lasting impact on what I produce today, even if it's not immediately obvious in my sound.

Q: How are you able to maintain a clean social media presence- when does Thabang come alive?

Honestly, my life is pretty low-key and boring. Ever since high school, I've always been that quiet guy who'd head straight home once the bell rang.



I'm not the type to be out there or constantly in the spotlight like some others in the industry. I prefer to keep to myself, not as a branding strategy or because someone advised me to, but simply because I like keeping my personal life separate from my work. When I'm at a gig, I'm in work mode; when I'm home, I'm just me. Over time, I've grown comfortable with that balance. And from what I've seen in this industry, it's a healthier way to live, staying grounded, avoiding the fast life, and not getting drawn into things that don't really concern you

Q: You often seem uncomfortable receiving praise for your work and compliments in general. Is that a misunderstanding of your personality, or are you still adjusting to the recognition that comes with your growth as a musician?

It's not necessarily discomfort, it's more about being cautious. Not every compliment is as sincere as it sounds, and I've learned to pay attention to what isn't being said just as much as what is. I try to stay grounded and not become reliant on praise, especially in an age where social media can create a false sense of validation.



That said, I truly value genuine feedback. I take it seriously, I reflect on it, and I use it to understand how others experience my work. But I'm also aware of how too much praise, especially too soon, can alter a person's path. I've seen what it can do, how it can stunt growth by creating a false sense of arrival.

Take the fact that I'm credited with creating an entire sub-genre, 3 Step, as an example. That is a significant acknowledgment, no doubt. But I don't let it inflate my ego. It was simply a moment of alignment where I explored new boundaries and it worked. There's still so much more to learn, to evolve, to push. Music is much bigger than any of us, and I want to stay open to where it can take me next. So if I seem hesitant with compliments, it's just my way of keeping perspective.

Q: As your profile grows, how do you plan to manage your privacy and mystique?

I don't have all the answers yet. I'm still figuring it out, but I want to stay authentic. I've noticed that stepping out more has helped me gain confidence. I'm learning to balance being visible without losing myself or becoming too predictable.

Q: When do you feel most comfortable expressing yourself?

I'm still quite shy, and feel most comfortable on stage or at shows that I've curated. I love discovering new places and connecting with audiences where I feel their energy aligns with mine. It's about growth and exploring different environments and anything that needs me to be ingenuine, too hyper, too flashy is not for me.

Q: Besides having an international management team, you also perform at international gigs to diverse crowds. How do you maintain the authenticity of your craft across different environments while still staying relevant to each audience?

One thing I appreciate about my team is that they never try to change who I am as an artist. I bring my core identity to every stage, no matter where I'm performing. I do adapt to the energy of each crowd, but I stay true to my sound, that's important to me. A lot of international artists tailor their sets so drastically that their performance in Europe, for example, sounds completely different from what they'd play in South Africa or even in Eswatini. I prefer to stay consistent because event organizers book me for my sound. It would be a disservice to show up and play something unrecognizable.

That said, there are moments when a crowd might not immediately connect with what I'm playing, especially in places where my sound isn't as familiar. I see those moments as opportunities to educate. I read the energy as soon as I step on stage and reshape my set in a way that guides the audience into

my world. Over time, as you keep sharing your music, you start to find those cities and crowds where the energy naturally aligns, regardless of culture or language. Those are the moments that remind me why I do this.

“ I do adapt to the energy of each crowd, but I stay true to my sound, that's important to me. ”

Q: What are your thoughts on independence as an artist?

Independence is often misunderstood. It involves understanding what being independent truly means—having control over your work, partnerships, and how you manage your brand. It's not about working alone but rather about creating strategic collaborations while maintaining ownership of your craft.

Q: Are there common misconceptions about you that people often misunderstand?

People often think I'm reserved or that I don't want to be in the spotlight. I'm just particular about my personal space—I dislike being on the phone or living for content creation all the time. I prefer simplicity and music.

Q: How do you see your growth impacting your personal life?

My music is deeply connected to who I am, but as my career has grown, certain simple things have become more difficult, such as being in crowded places or constantly flying. I've developed a stronger need for quiet and privacy. It's really about finding a balance between the demands of the career and protecting my peace of mind. One thing that always grounds me is taking time off to visit my mother's house. Just being there, enjoying a plate of mince and pasta, my favorite meal, is enough to reset everything. It reminds me of where I come from and helps me stay centered.

Thank you for your time. Keep blessing us with the music that moves us.

“Quitting my 8–5 job to pursue HoneyChildStyle full-time was the most empowering moment of my life.” – Pinky Glover

By Ayanda Dlamini

Embarking on a journey in the fashion industry is an ambitious endeavour that requires creativity, business acumen, and relentless passion.

Beyond technical skills and creative vision, the foundation of building a thriving fashion brand rests upon you, especially your character traits.

As a creative entrepreneur, you'll embark on a unique journey, weaving together your artistic vision with your business savvy. It's a delicate dance, a perfect balance between the right and left brains, where your creativity meets your strategic thinking.

For starters, it's important to understand that building a successful fashion brand demands a diverse array of traits, including resilience, adaptability, business insight, visionary leadership, and curiosity.

Fashion label, HoneyChildStyle, founder Pinky Glover believes that to make it in this industry, one needs support, especially from family.

HoneyChildStyle is a unisex, trans-seasonal, and transitional loungewear brand designed for comfort, confidence, and everyday style. They focus on high-quality pieces like t-shirts and tracksuits, while also introducing seasonal items such as dresses, sleepwear, suits, and lounge sets. Their sizing is intentionally inclusive, with some pieces going up to 4XL. The store is located at Serendipity Complex in Mbabane.

Glover needs no introduction in this field. Her love for fashion started when she was just a toddler. We've seen her gracing several festivals and events, always looking like the queen she is.

“A strong support system has made a huge difference, from family to mentors to peers. I've also leaned heavily on the relationships I built during my corporate career. Having people to advise and support you in moments of uncertainty is priceless. My experience in the corporate world instilled in me a solid work ethic and deep appreciation for customer service, which I carry into everything we do at HoneyChildStyle,” she says.

Back to her love for fashion, Pinky recalls one of her earliest memories: making a fur coat for her cousin's Barbie doll using the lining from a car seat cover. She would spend hours sewing outfits for that Barbie.

“It was my first taste of creativity and self-expression. I believe the spark was inherited from my grandmother, who was a gifted seamstress. Her sewing room was her happy place, and watching her create left a lasting impression on me. After completing my law degree, I finally followed my heart and enrolled at the London International School of Fashion. Although I didn't complete the course, my love for fashion never wavered, and today, that passion lives on through HoneyChildStyle.”

“I always knew I wanted to be a designer, while my family encouraged me to pursue a more 'practical' degree - hence the law degree, but I

remained passionate about fashion. When I came into a small inheritance, I used it to study fashion.”

The name HoneyChildStyle was inspired by her circle of girlfriends. “We used to affectionately call each other 'honeychild.' That term came to represent sisterhood, style, and confidence—all things I wanted the brand to embody. Today, as the brand has grown to include menswear, we often use the abbreviation HCS.”

A: What are your brand's biggest strengths? What has made you stand out from the crowd?

P: Our greatest strength is our authenticity. HoneyChildStyle is deeply rooted in community, empowerment, and timeless design. We're intentional about inclusivity from our sizing to our collaborations and our ability to merge comfort with fashion-forward pieces gives us an edge. Our events, like The Hive Market, allow us to uplift other female entrepreneurs, which builds brand loyalty beyond the clothing.

A: The fashion industry is known for being fickle and fast-moving. What are some of the biggest challenges you face as a fashion business owner?

P: One of our biggest challenges is manufacturing. Many local manufacturers in Eswatini are hesitant to work with small or emerging brands, which forces us to source production internationally. This means additional expenses for customs, VAT, and shipping, all of which drive up our costs and impact our pricing.

It also makes it harder to compete with larger retailers like Woolworths and Truworths, who benefit from economies of scale. Our reliance on manufacturers in countries like South Africa, China, and Turkey limits our flexibility and slows down turnaround times.

Local production is both our greatest hurdle and an area where we see potential. We're actively working to build partnerships with reliable suppliers in hopes of eventually manufacturing locally. Not only would this reduce costs and



increase efficiency, but it would also allow us to create jobs and support the local economy.

A: How do you define success for your brand?

P: To me, success is building a brand that thrives commercially but also makes a difference. HoneyChildStyle is not just a fashion label; it's a movement. A recent example is our Women's Month campaign, where we are launching a limited-edition t-shirt that promotes female empowerment. A portion of the proceeds will support a local women's advocacy organization, which we'll reveal in due course. That, to me, is the kind of success that matters, style with purpose.

A: Looking back at your journey, what has been the most defining moment(s)?

Taking that leap of faith was scary, but it was the beginning of everything

P: Quitting my job to pursue HoneyChildStyle full-time was the most empowering moment of my life. For years, the business was a side hustle, and naturally, it never truly flourished because I wasn't giving it the attention it deserved. Taking that leap of faith was scary, but it was the beginning of everything. I've never looked back. Now, as we prepare to launch our special edition t-shirt campaign this August, I'm reminded of why I chose this path: to create fashion that uplifts, inspires, and leaves a mark.

A: Can you tell us more about the upcoming campaign?

This August, HoneyChildStyle is launching a heartfelt Women's Month campaign titled "She is the Honey", a celebration of the softness, strength, and resilience that women bring into our lives. At the heart of the campaign is a limited-edition t-shirt honouring the many ways women nurture, lead, and uplift. A portion of the proceeds from each shirt sold will go to The Brave Girl Initiative, a local organization empowering young girls in Eswatini.

But this campaign is about more than fashion, it's about storytelling and community. We'll be spotlighting real women from our community, alongside influencers,

who will share what makes them "the honey": their quiet strength, grace, and ability to inspire others.

Importantly, She is the Honey also invites men to take part. Whether by purchasing a shirt or sharing stories of the women who inspire them, mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, and friends, we're calling on the men of eSwatini to help us honour the women who deserve to be seen, heard, and celebrated.

A: What inspired you and your team to venture into this campaign?

P: For me, this campaign is deeply personal. HoneyChildStyle has always been about more than fashion; it's about creating a space where women feel seen, celebrated, and supported. I was raised by strong, graceful women like my grandmother, a seamstress

and entrepreneur who shaped our family with quiet strength.

Their legacy inspired me to honour the women who came before us while making space for the women we're becoming. Partnering with The Brave Girl Initiative felt like a natural fit, they're doing powerful work to uplift the next generation. This campaign is our way of celebrating the past, supporting the present, and investing in the future of women.

A: Where do you see your brand in the next 5 years?

P: In five years, I see HoneyChildStyle becoming a recognized African fashion brand. We plan to expand beyond eSwatini, with physical stores in key cities across the continent, grow our e-commerce platforms for global accessibility, and collaborate with African designers to

create limited-edition capsule collections. Through fashion, we also want to continue playing a meaningful role in social impact with initiatives like our upcoming campaign, celebrating, supporting, and uplifting the women in our community.

A: What advice would you give to someone looking to follow in your footsteps and start a fashion business?

P: Fall in love with both the creativity and the business side of fashion. Designing beautiful clothes is just one part, you need to understand your customer, how to reach them, and how to turn your ideas into a sustainable brand. Set clear goals, plan strategically, and stay committed, even when challenges come. In fashion, success is as much about resilience as it is about talent.

Thank you for your time, Miss Glover.

It's been a pleasure! Thank you for having me!





INNOVATION MEETS SUSTAINABILITY AS **EEZYPODS** TRANSFORMS LIVING IN ESWATINI

By: Nothando Masilela | Photo: EezyPods

On the hills of Dwaleni, on the unassuming Farm 693, a quiet revolution is taking shape, one modular pod at a time. At the helm is Joe Roques, a visionary designer and sustainable builder who is redefining what home can look like in the 21st century. His creation, EezyPods, is not just about housing, it's about a new way of living; smart, efficient, environmentally conscious, and deeply personal.

Driven by his passion for design and sustainability, Roques took on the bold challenge of creating Eswatini's first pod house in Dwaleni, an effort that led to the founding of EezyPods, a company that crafts high-quality, sustainable modular pods blending comfort, efficiency, and style.

"The inspiration for EezyPods came from witnessing the many challenges of traditional construction lengthy build times, high costs, and environmental impact," Joe explains. "I wanted to create housing that's not only affordable and efficient but also environmentally conscious and aesthetically pleasing." This vision gave birth to EezyPods, a modular housing concept designed to offer sustainable, scalable, and stylish solutions to the region's growing housing needs.

Modular housing sits at the crossroads of innovation, sustainability, and necessity and Joe believes the timing couldn't be more urgent. "I chose this path because it allows us to create high-quality homes faster, with less environmental impact, and at a lower cost without compromising on design or comfort," Joe attests.

Globally, more people are embracing minimalist, eco-friendly living—prioritizing smart design, energy efficiency, and flexibility over large spaces.

At the same time, Africa and Eswatini is seeing a massive surge in housing demand. "Urbanization is accelerating, and the need for scalable, sustainable solutions is critical," Joe notes. "We're not just building pods, we're building the blueprint for Africa's future housing: smart, fast, affordable, and green."

EezyPods offers a wide range of pod models to suit diverse needs and environments:

- **Meerkat Pod:** A compact starter unit ideal as an office, gym, or guest room with the option to add bathrooms or kitchens later.
- **Osprey Pod:** Designed for individuals or couples, this sleek pod features a large picture-frame window, perfect for off-grid living.
- **Bateleur Pod:** Robust and rainwater-harvesting ready, ideal for eco-conscious users.
- **Mongoose Pod:** Slim and seamless, it's perfect for nesting between rocks and trees.
- **Aardvark Pod:** A spacious, versatile option great for a first home.
- **Custom Pods:** Tailor-made to suit specific needs such as studios, offices, or unique living spaces.

Each pod is engineered with sustainability and adaptability in mind, ensuring clients can live in a space that truly fits their lifestyle.

Who exactly is EezyPod for? The short answer is everyone. Whether it's young professionals entering the housing market, families desiring eco-friendly homes, businesses needing modular offices, or anyone willing to have a rental property that brings additional income without breaking



JOE ROQUES
Chief Pod Officer

the bank, EezyPods caters to a broad spectrum. "We're helping people find affordable, modern living spaces without the burden of traditional construction costs," Joe explains.

For Joe, the meaning of "home" is deeply personal. "A home is more than just walls and a roof. It's your sanctuary, a space that reflects who you are, where you feel safe and inspired." That sense of emotional connection drives every design decision at EezyPods. "We want to build spaces where people can truly thrive, without feeling like they've overextended themselves financially or environmentally."

EezyPods is proudly rooted in Eswatini, working closely with local artisans and suppliers to blend modern design with traditional craftsmanship. These collaborations boost the local economy and give each pod a unique cultural touch.

Looking ahead, founder Joe plans to expand into nearby regions and introduce new products, including community-focused pods and modular complexes—aimed at meeting the evolving needs of modern African living.

Want to see an EezyPod up close? Visit their Dwaleni workshop or explore more online at www.eezypods.com and on Instagram @eezypodeswatini.

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